

FILM SCORE BLOGS [Blog # 35]

Wednesday, November 28, 2007 at 2:20 pm PST

CD Reviews: [Note: 3 *** is Good; 4 ***** is Excellent; 5
***** is Outstanding]

Tribute Film Classics' (Stromberg conducting)

"Mysterious Island" ***

"Fahrenheit 451" *****

Naxos

"Sea Hawk" *****

Varese-Sarabande's (McNeely conducting)

"North by Northwest" ****

It is indeed a significant pre-Xmas season this year. We are blessed with three new Bernard Herrmann recordings. Two are by the new Tribute Film Classics label founded by John Morgan, William Stromberg and Bill's wife, Anna Bonn. These new complete releases by Tribute are *Mysterious Island* and *Fahrenheit 451*. The creation of their own label of film music recordings was announced December 8, 2006 at 7:36 am (posting first on the Talking Herrmann public site). So they had announced almost a year before the actual release of the cds that they will be recording these two scores, breaking the usual silence & secrecy of most other labels that fear to tell fans what they are doing (or have already recorded) until the release period.

The other Herrmann release (under the code of silence until about ten days back!) is *North by Northwest* thru Varese-Sarabande, conducted by Joel McNeely. According to McNeely's blog, the score was recorded four months ago in July:

http://web1.joelmcneely.com/blog/music/2007/11/north_by_northwest.php

The cd booklet cover looks very attractive. [I will discuss the booklets in detail about ten pages below] Of course I already preordered the cd along with the Wagner-referenced *Magic Fire* that Korngold arranged (this limited cd of 1000 copies had already sold out last week!). Despite the shaky track record of McNeely (*Twilight Zone*, *Marnie* especially) I am nevertheless looking forward to this recording. In fact, I will not send Sarah this new blog until I have received the cd (hopefully this time next week) and include my review here. I ordered the cds directly from Varese-Sarabande since SAE wanted about \$25 for N by NW (direct from Varese is \$20). I would've received from

SAE my copy of *Mysterious Island* about a week earlier than I did but I failed to make a single order for it. Instead I included *Fahrenheit 451* so I had to wait until the latter was finally available to have the order shipped. I received both cds yesterday. I was notified by e-mail on Saturday that it was shipped from back East (I live in Southern California).

At this moment of writing (2:39 pm) I am listening to track # 41 (“Attack”) from *Mysterious Island*. This cue was cut from the film and never heard before. Probably just as well since it’s not a particularly memorable or interesting cue! I discussed this unused cue in my massive 121 cue rundown of the written score. However, I can now finally (thanks to Tribute Film Classics) hear this music--but don’t listen to it if you happen to have a headache! The percussion comes thru very well in this recording. What Herrmann did in this percussive cue (4 timps, 2 bass drums, 2 cymbals, Tam Tam) reminds me of some (at least three) of his earlier *Crime Classics* radio scores that he chose to go the percussion route. This includes “Twenty-Three Knives Against Caesar” (Feb 10, 1954) where he utilized timp (G,Bb,D), high susp cymbal, large susp cymbal, Tam Tam, glock, vibe, chimes, temple blocks, maracas, triangle, etc. Some of the cues there were far more interesting than “Attack.”

[Added 12/16/07: Incidentally today I am adding the track locations or timings for each cue in my old rundown of the score]

Now: As posted last evening on Talking Herrmann, I consider Tribute’s *Fahrenheit 451* cd to be best deserving of tribute of the two releases. Both are winners, deserving of praise, but the *Fahrenheit 451* cd simply *sounds* better, technically speaking. I am not a recording technician but I assume that the smaller, intimate chamber-like nature of the score—and how they spaced the musicians and mikes—contributed to the excellence of the compact disc. John Morgan wrote in the “Recording Notes” beginning section of the superb-looking 32-page booklet: “In recording this music, we implemented Herrmann’s choices in instrumental placement as heard in the excellent London Stereo recording. We therefore divided the harps left and right as well as the one percussionist, who plays xylophone, marimba, vibraphone, and glockenspiel.” Hmmm. The way this sentence was worded, I wonder how they managed to divide the percussionist left and right! :)

Whatever the placement of players and mikes, whatever dials and levers the recording engineer manipulated at those *451* sessions and at the remixing console, it worked fabulously. It’s a gorgeous-sounding cd! The fidelity has a strong presence and vitality and clarity to it. The pristine quality of this recording reminds me of the 2001 Grammy-winner cd that I purchased months ago, “Shadow Dances: Stravinsky Miniatures” (2000) performed by the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, released by Deutsche Grammophon (289 453 458-2 GH). I don’t know how it is done but this *Fahrenheit 451* cd should be offered as a contender for the next Grammy Awards. Personally I will put the *Fahrenheit 451* cd by Tribute Film Classics as a prized mantle item of my cd collection, right up there with the *Jason & the Argonauts* cd produced by Intrada (Bruce Broughton conducting the Sinfonia of London). It really is that good! Just as conflict is the soul of drama, passion is the soul of music—and Stromberg & Co. demonstrated such passion in his conducting of the players in both premiere cd scores. If you own a copy of

the *Fahrenheit 451* cd by Tribute Film Classics, you have something special there. I truly feel that Tribute's 451 is an auspicious beginning for a dedicated new label. It is a crystalline recording technically, exhibiting diamond-like clarity and brilliance in detail.

Now: Is the McNeely version as good? You may recall that he conducted the Seattle Symphony Orchestra in the 1995 Varese-Sarabande release of ten (only) of the cues from *Fahrenheit 451*. No, it does *not* compare as favorably to the Stromberg/MSO version—although some of the renditions I liked. For example, I enjoyed what McNeely did for the “Prelude.” Interestingly, the strings in that performance were accentuated more than the harps and glock. In fact, at times you hardly hear the harps playing, and sometimes you don’t hear the notes striking on the glock. But that is not necessarily a bad thing because I liked the interpretation and emphasis. Whereas in the Stromberg/MSO performance, the balance is better. The harps are quite distinctive (as I believe Herrmann intended) as well as the glock. They are upfront. In fact, I think one of the strengths of the MSO recording is that the harps are uniformly heard very distinctively in a sparkling way. The overall problem I noticed about the McNeely recording is that the music “sounded” a bit harsh at times. I don’t think it was recorded properly, not the right balance and/or placement of mikes and players. It would’ve been interesting to know exactly how the players were distributed in the recording room/hall. Morgan briefly described the placements in his recording but the scant booklet for the McNeely cd did not provide such information. Moreover, the marimba in “Fire Engine” sounded a bit hollow or something, whereas as Herrmann version was far more “striking,” so to speak. I’m beginning to feel that you may have an excellent conductor and a fine orchestra, but if the recording/mixing is not done just right, then the quality of the overall cd will suffer. The technical side of the recording and mixing is apparently crucial and it is often the weakest link of the chain. If Morgan/Stromberg and Company did not do it “just right” with the *Fahrenheit 451* sessions (technically speaking) then the end product would not be as good as it is now, a true listening delight. I don’t think they did it “just right” in the *Mysterious Island* recording, although overall it’s pretty good-- but more on that later.

Of course normally I would defer to any Herrmann conducting of his own music! But I think Stromberg came very close overall to the way Herrmann would do it—except perhaps in the tempi timings in many cases. For example, Herrmann did his original Prelude at about 1:02 duration, while Stromberg and McNeely (1:34 and 1:30 respectively) did it far slower. Stromberg does “Clarisse” slower, “The Boys” slower (eleven seconds), “The Basket” and others. Some cues are right-on with the timings (such as “The Reading”). Slower tempi are not necessarily a negative. Far from it in most cases (unless it is noticeably *too* slow!—and God help the conductor!...and I believe even Stromberg mentioned this is a FSM Discussion Board post very recently). Even Herrmann was criticized with going slo-mo on his own music in his last few years of conducting his old scores for new recordings. The slower tempo provides an opportunity to better savor the music, in many cases, because now the music is not tightly boxed in with the scenes & action of the screen. In many cases (but certainly not all, such as the “Happiness” cue), however, Herrmann conducted his cues faster in the original sessions than what McNeely and Stromberg provided.

I played my Tribute cds on three devices: my old Sony player, my new Sony player, and my Panasonic portable player (with special Sony ear plugs). I wanted to make sure that what I was hearing was not skewed by one device and hence getting a false impression if there was a defect somewhere. In all cases, the final assessment is this: That Tribute's *Fahrenheit 451* cd is on fire! It was particularly delightful to hear the expanded cues—music either entirely cut from the movie (including complete cues). I was really taken by track # 10 ("Pink and Gold Pills"), track # 43 ("Freedom") and "The Railway" especially. [Note: I will be giving in-depth comments on many of the *Fahrenheit 451* cues (Tribute tracks) much later below starting about page 14]

[5:35 pm Wednesday] Interesting! Just as I am *now* writing about this score, Keith Olbermann on his MSNBC show *Countdown* (one of my favorite shows) is now referencing Ray Bradbury and his *Fahrenheit 451* novel! He is interviewing Mike German, formerly of the FBI, discussing how firefighters are being told to in effect spy on people they are inspecting (for fire hazards). They are being told to hose down or water down the Fourth Amendment and see if the people are exhibiting "discontent" with America by their words or reading material! Firefighters are now required to do the dirty work of Homeland Security!

Mysterious Island Track Review

Anyway, I'm now preparing a hot cup of Private Selection (Ralph's) Vanilla Chai Tea. ...Originally only Bar 25 thru end Bar 33 were used in "Pink & Gold Pills," a delightfully interesting cue when heard complete (for the first time thanks to Tribute Film Classics). A key motivation of creating anything (whether original music, rerecording someone else's music, whatever), besides basic self or value-fulfillment, is to hopefully provide some enjoyment and value to others. The Tribute team has definitely done this with the *451* cd—and also the *Mysterious Island* cd, mind you, but in my case I feel that *451* is a better, more enjoyable, "sound" experience. I have received complete satisfaction in that cd (but just not *as* complete in the M.I. cd). It's like that key saying in the movie *Barry Lyndon*: "I have not yet received satisfaction." It's very close but not as close as the *451* cd in terms of overall acoustic quality and performance.

Remember, I am stating this in reference to the nature of the *451* cd. If it never existed and I only had the *Mysterious Island* cd, then I probably would also, like so many others, think it is "great" (or whatever superlative that comes to mind). But *in comparison* to the *Fahrenheit 451* cd, I noticed the difference to my ears. In comparison, one was very good indeed, but the other (*451*) was better, a head above the other. It simply "sounded" better overall. So I truly enjoy and value Tribute's *Mysterious Island*. Stromberg did a wonderful job in capturing the spirit and interpretation of the score, but I had issues with the nature of the overall recording end of the music. Perhaps I am too fussy and I am quibbling here while 99% of the listening audience may think I am the Lone Wolf in my assessment, but to me the M.I. cd simply does not *sound* technically as detailed and precise and balanced and intimately as engaging as the *451* cd. The latter disc *sounds* more dynamic and "louder" and yet able to be finely detailed, whereas in various cases in the M.I. recording the sound was somewhat mashed or compressed so that the ability to pick up details was either lost or suffered. Again it is not a major

problem but it is there, something I noticed *in comparison* to the uniform excellence of the more intimate, chamber-like recording of the *Fahrenheit 451* cd. Perhaps the general bombastic nature of the M.I. score may have overwhelmed the recording process in some way (balancing issues, placement-of-mikes issues, whatever). It's generally good, and I enjoy the cd, but there seems to be some sort of a (minor enough but noticeable) deficiency in the recording end so that overall it simply does not "sound" *quite* as good as the *451* recording (in my opinion). Once again, I believe it is principally a compression problem in the remix.

For example, in track # 13 ("Clouds E") the stopped horns in the end bars on small octave and Line 1 C# are not picked up very well (about :45, :47, :49, etc on the cd). Yet they are very distinctive in the Herrmann recording. They got somewhat mashed down by the rest of the orchestra in the Tribute recording and, normally, stopped horns are piercing enough of an effect to be noticed in most cases.

Now: One of my favorite cues is "The Bridge" (track# 38), especially starting in Bar 6 (after the fanfare of the trumpets and trombones). Very ethereal! And Stromberg really captured this very well—but in a slightly different manner than Herrmann's version (1:00 point of track # 10 of the stereo CNR cd). Stromberg's version really seems to bring out the harps, whereas it was a bit more in the background in Herrmann's rendition. Yet Herrmann's clarinets and bass clarinets seemed to have a stronger emphasis, while Stromberg's recording is excellent but in a crisper rendition. The same applies to the brass in cup mutes (although Herrmann's brass mutes seem a bit more clearer or sharper). Both renditions are excellent however. I probably prefer the better emphasis on the harps, and of course I really enjoyed hearing the end four bars that were deleted in the pic. I think the Tribute M.I. fared very well in most of the non-tutti cues or sections of cues (like "The Bridge").

"Exploration" (track # 17) is another favorite of many people. Herrmann's rendition is quicker than Stromberg's (2:05 and 2:24 respectively). This is fine although I think the slowness can tend to make the harp arpeggios seem a bit plodding or deliberate in comparison (almost like a harpist practicing more slowly initially)—although the vibrancy of the harps picked up by the mikes in the Tribute recording helps tremendously. It's more accentuated than even the Herrmann rendition. But overall I liked both, and the sound quality is fine in this non-tutti cue—although I would tend to edge a little closer to Herrmann's rendition as the preferred (certainly familiar) rendition. Again, the Tribute version was just a bit too slow (which is not necessarily "wrong"). There is nothing right or wrong about it because, after all, it is an independent rerecording—not a recreation of the original tracks exactly as Herrmann did it for the film. However, to my ears, the slowness tended not to work as magically as the original tempo. Of course having it *too* fast would not be helpful either!

As written in my rundown about this "Exploration" cue: "I suppose an intentional homage (possibly an unconscious one) of this Herrmann cue was recently composed by Bill Stromberg in his cue "Improved Stockpile Bomb" for the atomic bomb documentary, Trinity And Beyond. The string lines of his cue are quite reminiscent of Herrmann's cue

here. Stromberg did not use harps, however. Stromberg's and John Morgan's music for the documentary is available on cd as well as dvd on separate tracks."

"The Giant Crab" in the OST is also faster than the Tribute version (2:46 to 3:00 respectively) but the latter speed doesn't seem to hurt the urgency of this action cue. I did notice, however, that Herrmann's horns (at least initially) seemed more "ferocious" than the Tribute version that was not picked up as well. Both do well (and the high piccolos, etc) in the Bar 19 "C" section.

"The Cliff" (track # 23) cue was pretty close in tempo (Herrmann's 1:30 to Stromberg's 1:34); however, in the following cue ("The Cave"), Stromberg's rendition was a lot slower (2:26 to Herrmann's 2:04). Curiously, in this non-tutti cue ("The Cliff") in Bars 6 & 7 (:20 and :25 on the Tribute cd track), the stopped horns are barely picked up, whereas the Herrmann recording has the horns picked up clearly. I think the diminishment of the horns heard (or almost not heard) in the Tribute rendition was not helpful in being faithful to the nature of the cue as intended by Herrmann. It's not a major issue but once again we are having problems in picking up the horns adequately, especially stopped horns. But they're picked up better at the 1:09 point of "The Cliff" (after all, the dynamic was to have them play *sforzando*). Overall, in this cue, I think Herrmann's rendition of the cue is clearly more "ominous" and striking. The Tribute version is weaker in comparison, less threatening.

"The Shadow" (track # 28) cue (that seques into the famous big bird cue and scene!) is quite close in tempo to Herrmann's (:40 to Herrmann's :39), and the quality of the *con sords* horns being heard in the Tribute version is quite good. The bass drums in the Tribute version are particularly strong, creating a nice dramatic urgency propelling the scene/music. I like Stromberg's rendition here very well.

Now to "The Bird" cue (track # 29) that is perhaps the most famous cue of the score, and one of the most entertaining scenes in the Harryhausen movie (my personal favorite). Well, I must say, the Tribute team did a pretty darn good job in this tutti cue (probably less tutti if you consider the ongoing dynamic build of the cue in its first appearance). The low woodwinds in the Tribute version are just as good as the Herrmann rendition, although I would give Herrmann's bass clarinets a very slight edge in Bars 5 to 8). When you come to the pronounced horns starting in Bar 17 with that eight-bar passage, Stromberg and Co. did a fine job here. They are distinctive here as well as in the Herrmann performance. Bars 25-28 in the C section (:42 point of the Tribute cd) are very nice (xylophones emphasis) but I prefer the clarity of Herrmann's version better—although I really liked the harps gliss in the Tribute version. However, that second section in Bars 29-32 (:49 starting) is really striking with the glocks fortissimo. So overall I feel that Tribute did a pretty good job here. Also, the tempo comparison is very close as well (2:40 to Herrmann's 2:37).

Another cue that opens very fine in the Tribute recording is "The Fire" (track # 36). It's loud and brassy (and properly dissonant)! Bravo! The brass is also very good in "Gunsmoke" although the VC/CB fortissimo notes underneath are not quite as clear as

the Herrmann version. The balance is not as good as the original—although it was nice to hear the distinctiveness of the brass in this Presto cue. The brass is equally strong in “The Sinking Ship” (including the horns) although the arpeggiando harps are dimly heard. There are intonation problems of the trumpets in the original OST cd (Herrmann’s version) anyway (Bar 15 or 16 I believe). VC/CB come thru just fine in the Tribute edition.

“Captain Nemo” (track # 43) is fine here but this time around Stromberg’s version is a bit faster (:40) than Herrmann’s (:45, start of OST track # 10). The cue seems a bit rushed to me, not savored enough as it deserves, particularly the last five bars. I would’ve preferred it a bit slower instead of a bit faster. The clarinets/bass clarinets are not as distinctive as Herrmann’s and tends to decay faster in volume. I like the first four bars but perhaps after that it could’ve slowed down a tad.

“The Bottle” (track # 44) is fine. I have no quibble about this nice woodwinds ensemble. Nice balance.

I like the “Pipeline”(track # 45) harp action if only because it better matches Herrmann’s tempo (not as slow as “Exploration” that made it a bit too self-conscious).

“Underwater” (track # 46) is overall weaker in comparison to Herrmann’s (especially the beginning where the English horns are definitely weaker than Herrmann’s, but it has it’s nicely played sections such as Bars 7-10 with the better-heard stopped horns, etc. So a mixed picture—once again, I think, a problem with the pick-up miking or ??? The english horns in cues such as this made it quite distinctive and atmospheric, so the weakness of their presence in this cd tends to dispel the magic of the intended music.

“Danger A & B” (tracks # 48-49) are fine.

“Lava Flow” (track # 50) seems weaker and a little less enthusiastic, especially with the woodwinds in Bars 13-16 (:24 point starting) but the VC/CB are better accentuated right after that. I noticed sometimes how they seem a bit diminished in other cues where Herrmann accentuates them in a better balance. After all, that bass accent is a prominent feature of Herrmann’s style, and I feel that he would have preferred greater weight to the basses in those cases.

“The Octopus” (aka ”The Hydra” later in *Jason & the Argonauts*) is fine but Broughton’s version is more finely detailed and clearly demarcated, I feel. This cue and “The Fight” (ala “The Hydra Fight”) are the exact same cues but the VC/CB are deleted in *Jason* and the C.B. clarinet added as well as augmented woodwinds. So it is interesting to be able to compare these shared cues between Broughton and Stromberg. Both versions come close in certain aspects, and both are fine. Just as there are taste tests, here’s an opportunity for a listening test. However, I can easily say that I prefer the Broughton version overall if only because the recording engineering seems to have been cleaner, picking up the timbres better in especially the loud Fight cue.

In “Octopus” Bars 1-4 are weaker than Broughton’s version, and Bars 8-12. Once again the English horns are picked up better in the Broughton rendition, and the Pos/tubas sound clearer in the Intrada cd. The harps seem clearer in the Stromberg version, however. It gets weak again in Bars 8-12 not so much with the Fags and C. Fags but the responding (:35 point, etc) tubas and timps for some reason. Harps are very good in Bar 13 and 14. But Broughton’s version particularly in end Bars 13-18 is very good, clearly demarcated. Anyway, Tribute’s version is fine but weaker in certain areas, not balanced clearly.

In “The Fight,” the Tribute version is even less effective than the other cue compared to Intrada, especially from Bar 20 on (section start 1:18 in the Tribute version). However, the timps action seems clearer in the Tribute rendition but the Pos and tubas seem to suffer, especially the sfp < section in Bars 11 thru 14 (start :40). It’s much clearer or pronounced in the Broughton recording. Again, it’s not necessarily the conducting. I think it’s more a problem on the recording/engineering end. The horns’ run of ascending 8th note figures starting in Bar 23 (1:29) is better heard in the Intrada rendition thru Bar 30. Also the trills of the English horns, clarinets, etc are not as prominent as the Herrmann version even. This end major section (2:14) starting on Bar 34 appears to be the weakest section of the recording. Again, as I pointed out much earlier, tutti cues like these tend to be a bit mashed in so that the details are not clearly heard as well as they should. Some sort of a miking/balancing problem—not the problem of the performers or conductor. Too bad the recording link had to be the weakest link, especially if the musicians and conductor were giving their heart and soul into it.

“The Raft” (track # 52) is fine

“The Rock” (track # 53) is fine.

“The Sub-Deck” (track # 54) is percussion-driven, and it’s one of the least enjoyable cues of this score. A bit of raw savagery here!

“The Tentacles”(track # 55) is good, just about equal as equal to Herrmann’s version—probably even cleaner, although Bar 4 had a bit of a problem with the tuba players not clearly defining the notes in that bar (:15)—at least to my ears.

“The Divers” (track # 57) Herrmann’s version is sharper and more punctuated.

“The Air Hose” (track # 58) is fine but Herrmann’s version is a bit more uniformly intense.

“The Ship Raising” (track # 59). Nice to finally hear the complete cue!

“The Earthquake” (track # 60). Another powerful tutti cue, done well here. Make sure the piccolos don’t pierce your ear drums!

“Finale” (track # 61). Nice ending, especially the ending of this cue (start :49) and then the nice harp arpeggios. This is a nice tutti recording.

Skipping a very wide interval to the “Prelude” I liked the “sound” here as well. The harps are quite clear, the horns are rightly accentuated, the low strings register very well. Nice job. Unfortunately they kept with the film version of the Prelude and deleted Bars 26-27 (1:06 intended location). As written in my rundown: “[Note: the first of these three phrases (Bars 26-27) was not used in the final edit of the film. Apparently Herrmann had to cut a few bars to more perfectly fit the final version for theatrical release. He had crossed out, for some reason, most of the end Bars but decided to keep the music. In his Phase Four rerecording, however, he kept intact all of the bars of the “Prelude” as originally intended. The Tribute cd also deleted Bars 26-27, unfortunately]”

“The Battle” (track # 2) is quite spirited but I wish the lower end instruments such as the VC/CB/tubas were better emphasized such as in Bars 35-43, and then Bars 47-52, etc. Otherwise I like this bravado performance.

The stopped horns in “The Gates” (track # 3) are heard very well, and the *sords* horns. Of course they are soli, so that’s to be expected! Tubas are deep and growling.

“The Stairs” (track # 4) have the tubas and low woodwinds register better but the horns still tend to overwhelm the bass clarinets/Fags/C. Fags a bit. The balance is not quite there as in Herrmann’s rendition.

“The Tower” (track # 5) is probably the best of the lot in this forlana/irregular triplet rhythmic sequence of cues. “The Escape” (track # 6) comes close but once again the CB/bass clarinets/C.Fags do not register too well (especially the CB). Otherwise a nice animated cue!

“The Balloon I” (track # 7) in the Tribute cd has its moments but overall I prefer the original tracks. The VC is supposed to be playing the opening rising to falling triplet 8th figures fortissimo, and then a dynamic build with the violas starting in Bar 5, but here they are weak. The timsps are strong but too strong because of the balance situation. Tubas are pianissimo but even so they are a bit too weak in Bars 3-4 as well. It gets better with the violins entering in with the legato triplets starting in Bar 9 (:10). The stopped horns are weak in Bars 18 (:22), 20, 22, and so forth. The Pos are fine in Bars 17 on. Trumpets fine too. The horns are still relatively weak until, say, Bar 43 (:53). The music from Bar 43 really catches fire right to the end—except, as a quibble, it appears the trumpets stopped too soon in Bar 57 (1:13). So a weak start, but a rousing end.

“Introductions” (track # 8) was an editorial entry, nicely played with vigor. Very good rendition.

“Clouds A” (track # 9) is vigorously played too but the english horns seem almost toy-like, the flutes are weak in Bar 16, the high strings strained starting in Bar 20 (:33), and so forth. One of the relatively deflated cues in the recording, unfortunately—especially since I find this cue one of the most “uplifting” cues in the movie! :)

“Clouds B” (track # 10) is better—in fact, a lot better. I wish they had another take on “A.”

“Clouds C”(track # 11) is also very nice here, replaying also the first 12 bars. I love the end Bar 13 *sff* bass clarinets on low D/F# double-dotted whole notes held fermata! Terrific resonant sound!

“Clouds D”(track # 12) is also very nice but there seems to be a problem in Bars 22 (located :27-:28) for the trumpets.

“Clouds E” (track # 13) is about as weak as “Clouds A” especially in the beginning. The woodwinds seem particularly unassertive, and the horns just don’t sound right to me, rather tint-y in Bars 5-6 (about :17) and then again. It gets better about :45 (starting Bar 13) but the stopped horns can be accentuated just a tad more.

“Balloon II” (track # 14) seems a bit better-sounding to me than the first version discussed earlier. But there seems to be a sound feedback problem or something at about the 1:50 point more or less, reverb or something that seems to be overtaxing the recording process in some way.

“The Island” (track # 15) has a bit too much reverb “echo” in this recording, especially noticeable towards the end. It needed to be drier. Definitely this is one of the poorest recorded cues in the album, in my opinion. “The Rocks”(track # 16) is a little better, and I can listen to this one more—whereas I try to avoid “The Island” because it is not quite agreeable to the ears. I am reminded of that echo-y *Torn Curtain* album.

“Exploration” (track # 17) I already discussed. Too slow for its own good, somewhat mechanical, too deliberate, and even the strings seemed a bit strained here. I’ll stick with the stereo Herrmann rendition on the CNR label (despite that one intonation problem I recall being there). I rather wish they had recorded this cue during the *Fahrenheit 451* sessions that sounded so terrific. Oh, well...

I can’t be too crab-by about Stromberg’s rendition of “The Giant Crab” (track # 18). The performance was quite vigorous except that I wish it was a tad more menacing with the horns. Again the problem seems to be on the technical recording side for the most part (although the stopped horns were shaky at about the 2:29 point more or less) I think around Bar 55.

“The Volcano” (track # 19) is okay here but it seems to be a bit too rushed. I wish they increased the volume dynamics a bit more and slowed it down somewhat--but it’s very nice to finally hear the *complete* cue! My main observation is that the strings seem (to my ears) to cut off too early leaving a tiny space of silence before the responding instruments plays, especially in the final or fourth sequence. Once again, nice try but it didn’t come across quite as magically and atmospherically as Herrmann did with his own rendition.

“The Crater” (track # 20) is a nice try as well but this interpretation didn’t quite live up to the same power and strength as the OST. Also there sounds to me a “hollow” feeling again, not enough sheer clarity as the original.

In “The Beach”(track # 21) the high strings seemed a bit strained again initially, although I’m sure the same players did *Fahrenheit 451*, so I imagine it’s once again a recording problem. The strings in “The Stream” (track # 22) are again not as effective as in the *451* recording, especially the violins. The clarinets and bass clarinets sound fine enough in both cues, though, especially effective in “The Beach.” So it’s a mixed picture.

“Narration” (track # 25) is one of the poorer cues. The strings don’t sound so engaging in the recording end of it, and a bit rushed in the conducting end of it. And they do not *Rall.* quite enough in Bars 10-11 as called for in the cue. The horns sequence is too echo-y once again—but certainly loud and present!. The strings return but I’m just not happy with the sound, especially in the end two bars. It’s amazing how the strings can so terrific in the *Fahrenheit 451* recording but here they sound a bit strained and tint-y and removed in some cues here in this album.

“R.C.” (track # 26) sounds fine. Nice sound here!

“Elena” (also with the clarinets and bass clarinet soli) is a problem cue because the clarinet players seemed to have trouble with the notes in Bar 6 (:17-:18). At least it sounds like awkward playing to me.

“Duo” (track # 30) is nice. The strings seem to sound better here. The clarinets are excellent. This leads to “Honey Comb” (track # 31), one of my favorite short cues in this score. It sounds nice here but I think clarinets II-III-IV can express (:04 point for example) a little more energy and volume and “fullness” and “weight” here (as in the Herrmann rendition).

“Giant Bee I” (track # 32) is another famous cue from this score. It’s a good try but I think the clarinets and bass clarinets had a little trouble doing the fast figures in Bar 16 (:27)—at least to my ears. Flutes were more adept but not enough volume (although the score stipulates *fff*) and sounds weaker than the original. Brass is good, and the low strings—although the sords horns initially could be a bit more pronounced and “there.” Surprisingly the harps are low in volume or weak for a change. Normally they perform and sound quite well. Overall I still like this version but I think the original is more effective.

“The Sail” (track # 33) is admirably pronounced, well played. So too “The Flag: after Giant Bee II.” Sounds like a cue Herrmann would’ve used for “The Jar” episode from *Alfred Hitchcock Hour*.

“The Fire”(track # 36) I already discussed. Nice cue! This recording really seems to “bring out” the music even better than the original in some ways. One of the best cues in this recording. It would qualify as a Five Star track.

“The Nautilus” (track # 37) is fine. I like it—though I would probably edge closer to the original. The cup-muted trumpets sound better than the cup-muted trombones (the latter a bit too weak or dominated by the high strings).

“The Pirates” (track # 39) is fine. I have that stereo CNR recording of “The Pirates” except that it’s not stereo for this cue! Only one channel comes thru on my portable cd player that can easily detect if a channel is missing. One earplug fails to register any sound, but the stereo comes back at about the 2:00 point when “The Sinking Ship” seques in.

Mysterious Island Booklet

Now: Let’s focus on the cd booklet. It will take quite a bit of “Exploration” to adequately cover this 32-page color booklet! Bill Stromberg preludes the booklet with his “Notes from the Podium.” He recounts how tremendously important the influence of Herrmann’s music in *Mysterious Island* was on his psyche. He would run around the house squawking like the giant Bird music...I mean, he would squawk over and over around the house *then* when he was a little kid, not *now*! Of course he seems to be a smiley, enthusiastic kind of guy who may spontaneously squawk as such even now! So obviously the roots of his value fulfillment (in conducting this score) plumbed deeply in impressionable early childhood. *Mysterious Island* had deeply influenced the psyche of many people, including of course John Morgan and Christopher Young (from their Liner notes in this booklet).

Then Anna Boon, Executive Producer (I guess that means “The Boss”), wrote four paragraphs on “The Debut of Tribute Film Classics.” I guess naming it “Tribute Film Score Classics” would’ve been a bit too long. Based on “Tribute Film Classics” my wife tells me that numerologically it shows the 9/4/4 pattern --9 Soul Urge (vowels); 4 Personality (consonants); 4 Name (total). She just told me that means it will be a very solid (4) and selective (9) business, and intuitive (9), but it needs to be very vigilant with money because of the missing 8 (money/power/authority/control). Otherwise, with the missing 7 (wanting the best/superiority/judgment) as well, they will not use common sense (7) and may spend too much or whatever. She’s the numerologist in the family (I’m the astrologer) so I take her at her word!

“Varese-Sarabande” has the major numbers 6/8/5. If Tribute was called “Tribute Film Score Classics” it would have 2/8/1 major numbers. The “8” Personality means that others would see it more as a business (8) and powerful. Varese has the “8” Personality major number.

Next we read Bruce Crawford (“Film Historian”) writing less than a booklet page on “Mysterious Island: An Appreciation.” It changed his life as well!

Next from no less than Ray Harryhausen writing “On Film Score Restoration.” I wished he had written far more, especially his experiences with Herrmann. Of course the

booklet was already bursting at the stapled seams so I guess that would not be advisable to add even more pages!

Next is “Recording Notes” by John Morgan, the champion of film music restoration. He discusses the many changes often occurring in a film and how the music changes as a result. In my rundown of *Mysterious Island* I discussed how messed up or cut up this score really turned out to be (as edited/cut in the movie), so it’s a pleasure to finally be able to hear the *complete* score! Eventually John wrote how “Bill Stromberg set up the orchestra in a rather unorthodox seating arrangement to ensure separation of the various instrumental choirs...I remember our engineer being concerned about the up-front sound of the low woodwinds. But we told him, ‘That’s Herrmann, and we must have clarity in those parts.’”

Perhaps this “unorthodox” arrangement is a significant clue as to why the recording “sounds” as it does to me (besides the compression/remix issues). Despite the good intentions, sometimes the soundscape effect was not as clear and balanced as hoped (at least to my ears), whereas the *Fahrenheit 451* recording, as I “clearly” noted previously, was quite crystal clear and dynamic and up-front. As noted in my text, in various instances/tracks, instrument choirs were not consistently “up-front” (desired clarity) in *Mysterious Island*. I don’t know why but I surmise that it has something to do with the recording set-up/pick-up. Apparently the individual close-mike system was not used (I believe the MMM recordings did, if I recall past posts on the discussion boards) but that approach may’ve been prohibitive (and expensive?) in such an often bombastic score as M.I. And besides, would’ve it been “better”? I don’t know. Sometimes a certain system “works” (like the one used in *451*) and sometimes it doesn’t. It is indeed interesting to hear the low woodwinds being so upfront in many cases, and often the emphasized sections are very good choices. You hear them in a way not accentuated in the movie (and even better on the cd than in the film because of modern recording technology). However, it appeared other orchestral sections in various cues may have suffered because of the “unorthodox” miking. So, as indicated earlier, it appears that the recording link of the total process of music creation tends to be the weakest link. The conductor may’ve done his homework really well, the musicians may be the best in the business, the recording location may be the best—but if the engineering process has a problem in some way, there goes the intended quality of the cd on a consistent basis.

Next on the admirable cd booklet is “Herrmann and the LSO” by Gunther Kogebehn” (or is it supposed to be “Guenther”?). A nice, fact-driven little piece (information I didn’t know about earlier).

Next is a four-page piece simply titled “Bernard Herrmann” by Craig Reardon. This is a long but interesting (perhaps the most interesting contributing piece in this booklet!) subjective piece of writing. Basically, as I read this nice writing, Herrmann was a perfect fit for *Mysterious Island*. And he did write the one of the “most fascinating music ever heard in films” (Craig wrote *the* most fascinating). But I think, say, Max Steiner wrote perfect match score for certain films as well—including *Lion & the Horse*, *Parrish*, and many others. In its simplicity, Danny Elfman’s music for *Pee Wee’s Big Adventure* was a perfect fit. Anyway, it would’ve been quite interesting if Steiner did a

Harryhausen film. Then, in another probability, Morgan/Stromberg would've had as premiere Tributes cds, *Fahrenheit 451* (composed by Bernard Herrmann) and *Mysterious Island* (composed by Max Steiner)!

Anyway, I really enjoyed Craig's personal account of how he actually arranged a meeting with Herrmann! It was particularly illuminative when he wrote about Herrmann, "Herrmann, I noticed, would almost never look me in the eye, except furtively—an interesting idiosyncrasy. An idle thought occurred to me that he was afraid of me as I was of him!"

Next is "From One Composer to Another" by Chris Young. Another good personal account on how the chance hearing of the originally released London Records vinyl LP "The Fantasy World of Bernard Herrmann" actually helped motivate him to be a composer himself.

Next is the long narrative or descriptive account of the score cues itself by Kevin Scott. It is titled "The Not-So-Mysterious Debt to the Large Orchestra" but perhaps it could've logically been titled, "From One Conductor to Another." Kevin is a conductor who has discussed with authority on Talking Herrmann on various musical influences (other composers), and here in this booklet he does just that (in part) but I think especially in the *Fahrenheit 451* booklet cue descriptions. But here in this M.I. booklet, Kevin starts off with a commentary on the ever-growing orchestra through the generations starting with the Beethoven period to Berlioz to Wagner (of course!) and so forth. After a further exposition of what Herrmann designed to do for the BIG sound in *Mysterious Island* (although it was not a "big" movie under the penny-pinching producer Charles H. Schneer), Kevin focuses on the eight horns as the principal orchestral focus of the score. Fortunately the horns were not *that* dominant in all important and atmospheric cues, including the trumpets/Pos in "Nautilus" and "The Bridge."

Fah 451 Booklet

The *Fahrenheit 451* book is also an attractive, 32-page work of merit (just a little warmer in the hand). It opens with John Morgan's "Recording Notes" that I referenced on page 2 above (recording placements that were "instrumental," so to speak, in the success of the sound of the cd). He is right when he writes, "...listening to this complete recording of *Fahrenheit 451* is like discovering a new Herrmann score." Tribute did it *just right* with this one! The clarity and balance is amazing, and the performance impassioned and articulate. I may try to comment on each cue below but I don't believe I can find fussy fault with any of them that would amount to more than a mere quibble (especially none regarding the "sound" engineering quality). It indeed deserves a perfect Five Star rating. There are many OST recordings I love (such as Goldsmith's *Final Conflict* expanded edition) but very few interpretive re-recordings. Intrada's *Jason & the Argonauts* is one that gets my ***** rating, but so does now Tribute's *Fahrenheit 451*.

I need to re-listen to Tribute's companion piece for this cd, *Walking Distance*. However, upon first listening when I received the cd, I liked it a lot. Personally I would've preferred a more obscure strings/percussion piece from television or concert

that wasn't already available from other cds (McNeely did *Walking Distance* pretty well if I recall, and the original tracks were released too). *Nathan Hale* would've been a world premiere. However, *Walking Distance* certainly does fit the criterion of the nature of the cd, a logical choice.

Next in the booklet is "Bernard Herrmann and *Fahrenheit 451*" written by Ray Bradbury. It certainly was serendipitous for Bradbury to be on the set of *Torn Curtain* a few days before Herrmann was fired! You can see the photo of Ray, Hitchcock & Herrmann right on that page 3. Apparently, according to Ray, he was the one who suggested Herrmann as the composer to Truffaut when Ray was brought in for a conference meeting about *Fahrenheit 451*.

Next in the booklet is "Music of the Twenty-first Century?" by G. Kogebehn. Yes, thank goodness sound twelve-tone or other hard-to-take experimental score was not chosen over Herrmann's, otherwise it would've been the first thing burned even by Montag!

Next is "Lessons Learned from Herrmann" by Christopher Young. It is good that he is "insanely in love with Bernard Herrmann's music" (although Young's music is not necessarily as Herrmannesque at times or as frequently as another big fan of Herrmann, Danny Elfman). Then Chris gives four major points about Herrmann's music: (1) an exceptional musical dramatist; (2) superb orchestrator/musical colorist; (3) simplicity yet effectiveness in musical expression; (4) "mystery" in expression.

Next is "The Moscow Symphony Orchestra and *Fahrenheit 451*" by William Stromberg, praising how well the string players did for the recording. He recounts what appears to have been a highly impressionable and sensitive childhood when connecting the music of *Fahrenheit 451* (listening to the music in the dark in bed before going to sleep, etc). That's an excellent way to connect and influence the personal subconscious. Very watery approach (astrologically speaking).

Next is "The Debut of Tribute Film Classics" by Anna Bonn. This is a carbon copy of the one seen in the *Mysterious Island* booklet.

Next, and finally, is Kevin Scott's huge contribution ("Herrmann's Vision of the Music of the Future" (of narrative insights about the music in general, and also the music specifically (rundown of each recorded cue). Kevin goes even into more associative depth in this booklet for the score, *Fahrenheit 451*. For instance, in cue # 3 ("The Lamp") he comments how "Herrmann's interest in Bartok, filtered through an impressionistic veneer, becomes quite evident as the strings utter a parlondolike melody." The connection with Bartok is interesting, but not specific. I'll have to check it out. I'm curious. I usually don't associate Herrmann with Bartok in terms of influences.

More interestingly, Kevin writes for "Clarisse" (track # 4) that Herrmann's music here is "paying an indirect homage to Ives' 'The Housatonic at Stockbridge' from *Three Places in New England*." Again I usually don't associate Ives' music with Herrmann's

style (although Herrmann professed his respect for Ives' music many times) so I'll need to hear that indirect reference. In "The Bridge" (cue # 16), Kevin offers "an unconscious nod to the climatic portion of Dimitri Tiomkin's score for *High Noon*." Hmm, I'll have to dig out that fine special edition dvd and check it out. It seems unlikely but the watery associative process can show interesting connections for different psyches (that other psyches would not pick up). For instance, in "The Windows (cue # 30), Kevin suggests here "Herrmann's neo-Elgarian melody, reminiscent of "Sospiri." Hmmmm. I'll try to dig that Elgar clip up and see for myself. Then in "The Road" (cue # 45), he writes that Herrmann's music here "is in the same league as Barber's Adagio for Strings and the slow movement of Juan Rodrigo's *Concierto de Aranjuez*. Hmm, more interesting associations. In time I shall see. I believe I have Barber's work but I'll need to dig it out somewhere in my collection. At any rate, I think Kevin Scott "connected" more with this score in his more involved liner notes than even the *Mysterious Island* notes. After the cue rundown, he speculates more about film and alternate composers. Fortunately we don't have to speculate on the obvious: Herrmann was chosen, and he composed a score that would be futuristically reconstructed by John Morgan and conducted by Bill Stromberg as a scintillating cd.[end session Monday, December 3 at 9:30 pm]

Fah 451 Track Review

[Tuesday, December 04, 2007 at 6:13 pm]

Now to comments on individual cues:

"Prelude" (cue # 1). One criticism I have with this Tribute track is that it rather abruptly cuts/seques into the "Fire Station" cue. I think it would've been better to let this beautiful cue simply decay naturally, and then pause very briefly for the start of cue # 2. The Tribute team in Internet discussion forum posts had stated that their intention is to create the music for itself, not dependent on its relation to the film itself (as the composer originally had to do and serve the purposes of the picture). For instance, if they want to conduct M.I.'s "Exploration" cue a lot slower, then obviously they felt it was right and proper, and the tempo for the cd obviously has nothing to do with the trekking scene on the screen (timing purposes). Well, it would be illogical to then say, for instance, that the 451 Prelude sequed directly into the Fire Station scene/music *in the movie* —so therefore we should do it on the cd. If the intention is to do the cd not dependent on the action on the screen (as Herrmann had to do for cue cut-off timings), then I think it would be best to stick with it as a general rule. For me, at least, the sudden change of pace into "Fire Station" (with no pause) on the cd hurt the aural aesthetics just a bit (at least in terms of wanting to savor the unique identity of that cue). The nature of both cues are so strikingly different that the immediately entry of cue # 2 was jarring to me. After all, "Prelude" is Cue I (a totally separate cue) whereas "Fire Station" is Cue II (a totally separate cue). They cues do not need to be spliced together at the end of one and the beginning of the other in the cd. In fact, even in the movie/Herrmann version, there is a natural decay, and the end bar shows the fermata. While on the bottom of the written cue it says "overlap to 1M1A" you really don't get that same abrupt feeling because of the volume decay. Besides, once again, the movie is the movie; the cd should be the cd (given some case-by-case flexibility).

Note also that the Stromberg version is 1:34 in duration. The Herrmann version in the original tracks (OT) is barely 1:02. That's a big tempo slow-down! However, in this case, it did not seem to be a deliberate-sounding as Tribute's "Exploration" cue in *Mysterious Island* in the slower tempo. It worked out okay in this situation. We have in "Prelude" triplet value 16th note figures (4 six-note figures per bar or 24 notes played by the harps) in 4/4 time whereas in "Exploration" we have only 8th note figures (4 four-note figures per bar or 16 notes) in 4/2 time, so obviously the slower tempo in "Exploration" would seem even that much slower or deliberate or even mechanical when played by the harps).

"Fire Station" (track and cue # 2). As I wrote in my 451 rundown long ago: "...Bars 16-22 of "Fire Alarm" I believe is from Bars 9-15 of "Fire Station" (when the xylophone makes its familiar appearance). This page (or rather half of the original page) has that xylophone written in but that xylophone line is *not* played in the "Fire Alarm" cue later on. The page is physically and radically scissored up. This perhaps means that this page section was used here in the latter cue ("Fire Alarm") but the other half of that page from "Fire Station" was not." Also later on I wrote: "...It overlaps from the "Prelude" and is very similar to Cue 38 [11M3 "Fire Engine." Or I should say "Fire Engine" sounds similar to "Fire Station." Herrmann used Cue 38 in his London Phase 4 rerecording instead of the proper Cue 2 "Fire Station" (as intended originally to be overlapped from the "Prelude"). McNeely also recorded "Fire Engine" rather than "Fire Station" apparently because the written Cue 2 was (and still is) missing, apparently misplaced or lost by Herrmann himself. He never bothered to reconstruct the lost cue. This would seem to logically explain why the intended cue II was replaced by its kin cue, "Fire Engine....., if you listen to Track # 1 [Soundstage cd] on the cd from 1:14 thru 1:47, this music from "Fire Station" is identical to the music written (but not used) in "Fire Alarm" from the written timing of :58 thru 1:32 (Bars 16-37). The music is identical except in Bars 26, 28, 34 and 36 (where harp parts apparently were not used or at least I cannot hear them even though they are written fortissimo). It is possible Herrmann simply lifted that large section from "Fire Alarm" and inserted it into the beginning cue after the "Prelude" (namely, "Fire Station"). Hence you do not hear an exact repeat of that music in "Fire Alarm" where it was originally written to belong...."

So John Morgan had to carefully reconstruct the music for "Fire Station." I don't have time to speculate exactly how right now for this blog, but I'll give a few examples. In Tribute's "Fire Station" (track # 2) go to about the :12 to :23 point (I believe it starts on Bar 9). Here you hear the violins and violas playing I believe the measured trem quarter notes while VC/CB play non-trem quarter notes. Anyway you hear the xylophone playing familiar figures for these seven bars of C to $\frac{3}{4}$ to C to $\frac{3}{4}$ to C to $\frac{3}{4}$ to C. Well, if you go to "Fire Alarm" (track # 22) to the :32 to :43 section (Bars 16-22), then you hear the exact same music of the strings as in the just-mentioned "Fire Station." However, you do NOT hear the xylophone or marimba in this section of track # 22. In the scissored up score, you find this sub-section with black all around it. Herrmann obviously cut it up from somewhere else because the timing of it was marked as 1:02, then 1:06 and then 1:10 every third bar, etc. It's a mess!

The first eight bars (first 12 seconds) of “Fire Station” is exactly the same as the first 12 seconds of “Fire Engine” *except* that in the former you hear the xylophone (or marimba—I have to later turn on the cd to verify which) in Bars 2, 4, 6, 8 (all in the $\frac{3}{4}$ bars; silent in the C bars). So in “Fire Engine” (track # 38) you do NOT hear the percussion in those first eight bars or twelve seconds. The complete “Fire Engine” cue exists intact, once again, so Tribute of course played the cue exactly as written. It is the “Fire Station” cue (cue # 2) that had to be reconstructed from here and there!

“The Lamp” (track # 3). The first eleven bars of the written cue were missing in my research. Tribute’s tempo is almost exactly that of Herrmann’s for the movie. At the start of Bar 11, for example, the timing is :37 on the Tribute track, and :38 for the Herrmann track (although written :40). The recorded cue sounds great.

Now to one of my favorite cues, “Clarisse” (track # 4). Tribute’s track is 1:05 while Herrmann’s version is :59, so Stromberg conducted it a bit slower (but that’s fine for this cue). You really hear the music with greater clarity in this modern re-recording of course, and that’s helpful. Stromberg’s nuances are almost precisely the same as Herrmann’s conducting, although Herrmann entered the melody line just a tad bit more softly and mysteriously; that is, violins I here play a bit more strongly in the Tribute version—but there is still that nice decay of the altri strings in Bars 6, 8 10, and 12 just as Herrmann did it (an afterglow resonance despite the written music saying there’s supposed to be a quarter rest silence). Excellent job here.

“Happiness” (track # 5). It’s nice (gives me “happiness”) to finally hear the complete cue. In the movie version only up to Bar 5 was used (the remaining three bars were unhappily not used). Stromberg’s version is faster than Herrmann’s. The start of Bar 2 (the grace bar does not constitute Bar 1) in Herrmann’s version is :07 whereas in the Tribute version it is :05. The start of Bar 3 is :12 for Herrmann, :10 for Stromberg.

“T.V. Signals” (track # 6). Finally we get to hear these series of mini-cues (seven in all). Only the fourth one (2M4) was used in the motion picture. This cue(s) reminds me of Herrmann’s *Brave New World* ambiance somewhat.

“Bedtime” (track # 7). Once again we finally get to hear the complete cue. Only the first six bars were used in the film. Stromberg’s version is faster than Herrmann’s by about three seconds, almost four. It’s very good to be able to hear that *Lento* end section (starting 1:14). Here violins play forte decrescendo small octave G/Line 1 F# whole notes tied to whole notes next bar, while violins II play small octave Bb/Line 1 F# tied whole notes, violas on small octave E, VC/CB on Great octave Bb tied whole notes. After a quarter rest held fermata in that bar that starts this section, harp I plays *mf* small octave Gb up to Line 1 F 8ths down to Bb up to Line 2 C 8ths down to Db up to Line 1 E 8ths, etc. Harp II plays small octave Bb up to Line 1 Db 8ths figure three times, and the vibre strikes Line 1 F# whole note.

“The Boys” (track # 8). I liked this cue a lot in the movie. Stromberg did a great job in matching Herrmann’s nuances (Herrmann may’ve been a tad more pronounced in

his crescendo-decrescendo statements). This time around Herrmann's version is faster than Stromberg's—but it's not uniform. At the start of Bar 5 it is :16 in the Tribute version but :14 in Herrmann's. At the start of Bar 9 it is :33 in the Tribute track but :29 in the Herrmann version. At the start of Bar 13 it is :50 in the Tribute version while it's :45 in the Herrmann version.

“Home” (track # 9). Sections of this short cue were deleted in the movie as well, although Tribute forgot to enter the asterisk signifying that track # 9 also “includes music cut from the film.” For instance, Bars 5 thru 7 were cut originally. So it's very good to be able to have the complete cue restored.

“Pink and Gold Pills” (track # 10). Tribute to the rescue! Only Bars 25 to 33 were used in this butchered cue in the movie so we finally get to hear this fascinating cue (one of my favorite tracks in this new recording)! Having this complete cue is almost worth the price of the cd. I like section “B” (my terminology) of Bars 9 thru 14 (:21 thru :36). Harp I plays Line 3 C down to Line 2 C up to F down to C 8ths figure played twice to (Bat 10) Line 2 B down to Line 1 B up to Line 2 F down to Line 1 B 8ths figure played twice (repeated in Bars 11-12 and 13-14). Harp II plays small octave Ab quarter note up to Line 1 Eb (I believe) quarter note down to Ab quarter note, and so forth. The vibe sounds two grace notes to Line 2 C whole note. In Bar 11 (:27) celli enter to play *sempre pp* ascending quarter note bowed tremos while CB pluck *pizz* quarter notes. Etc.

“Recovery” (track # 11). For a change, this cue did not need a reconstruction or revival recovery because the complete cue was in the movie. The Herrmann version is slower by about two seconds.

“The Bedroom” (track # 12). This is a frequently played, popular cue from the score. Stromberg's version is slower by about ten seconds. For instance, the location point at the start of Bar 16 is :59 (but :49 in Herrmann's original version). The sound quality is good but I think this is one of the weaker cues in the Tribute cd. I feel that *this* time around the much slower tempo hurt the impassioned nature and sensuality of the intended music. Herrmann's version was more on the mark as intended—but Stromberg's version is nevertheless fine. I prefer the original speed.

“The Monorail” (track # 13). As I wrote in my rundown of the score: “...This is a highly curious cue because the originally orchestrated cue is *not* the cue you hear in the movie. The first three bars are exactly the same as written, but then, instead of the violas and violins I playing the largely descending 8th note figures (as written), you hear the glock playing that series of figures with the low violins playing bowed tremolo half notes. The “new” 5M2 cue is not present in the archives...” [or at least what was pulled for me at the time when I researched the score]. The Tribute gang recorded the cue as heard in the movie. This is good but I also wish they had room to record (or if actually recorded then “to include” on the cd) the originally written cue. It's pretty much the same except that starting in Bar 4 the glock plays the 8th note figures that violins I originally were intended to play—and there are NO trem half note chords in the original version.

Stromberg's version is pretty much exactly the same tempo as Herrmann's. For instance the start of Bar 4 is :11 in both tracks.

"The Novel" (track # 14). This is also a fully restored cue. The first several bars were not used in the picture. Stromberg's tempo and Herrmann's are just about exact. Nice track.

"The Garden" (track # 15). AS I wrote in my rundown: "...this touching cue was later self-borrowed four years later in *Battle of Nerevta* (the "Pastorale" cue or Cue XIII). The music was reworked (woodwind instruments) even sooner in 1967 as cues 18, 24, and 19 in "The Reckoning" episode [starring Charles Bronson] of the television series, *The Virginian*.... I played the dvd to this section right after the scene where Montag was reading *David Copperfield*. It is odd continuity to have this next day scene that is then cut to another morning scene ("The Bridge") in which Clarisse and her "Book Lady" friend follow Montag from his home to work. It would've been better continuity to fade from "The Novel" sequence to the following morning's "The Bridge" sequence. Anyway, I played McNeely's rendition while the dvd was playing this scene, and it fits very well, especially the section involving the baby and the tiny book. In the final print of the movie, however, there is no music except at the very end. Very oddly, the left part of the screen is rolled black while the right half of the screen shows Montag searching a man in the garden. Why Truffaut decided to use this effect is beyond me. Moreover, music does indeed enter this ending section, but it is lifted from the beginning of a much later cue, "The Captain's Death." Very strange indeed...."

Good to hear this very nice version on Tribute.

"The Bridge" (track # 16). I like this cue a lot. Stromberg's temp is the same as Herrmann's. Everything is matched. Nice performance.

"The Café" (track # 17). Nice suspenseful minor little cue. Stromberg's tempo matches exactly. [end session 10:22 pm]

[resume session Wednesday, December 5 at 7:09 pm. Still haven't received my copy of *North by Northwest* yet!]

"The Box" (track # 18). This is a pizzicato suspenseful cue not too unlike "After-Beats" from *The Trouble With Harry*, and it's plucked very well by the Moscow Symphony Orchestra (and in the same tempo as Herrmann's version).

"The Corridor" (track # 19). This originally-intended school corridor cue was not used in the final edit of the movie. The most memorable part of this scene is seeing Diffing also playing the Head School Mistress when "she" is seen quite briefly behind the door! This poignant, lyrical music is quite soothing and reflective starting in Bar 5. It is now one of my favorite cues in the score.

“Montag’s Books” (track # 20). Standard ostinato-driven cue for the violins playing the rhythmic pattern. Stromberg’s tempo is just about the same (maybe a second faster than Herrmann’s).

“The Pole” (track # 21). Only the first nine and a half bars were used in the film. The rest of the music was dialed out as Montag talks with Fabian (Anton Diffring). Great to hear the whole cue finally. The end three bars are quite dissonant as violins II plays Line 2 C/Eb/Gb/Bb (C half dim 7th) tied notes but violins I clash with this on the B/Line 2 D/F#/B (B min) tied notes (combined bitonal chords—in effect, a cluster of notes).

“Fire Alarm” (track # 22). Very vigorous cue played here! It was reconstructed because the written cue was a scissored-up mess. In the Tribute track, the first six bars (first ten seconds) opens the music, and then it appears the first five bars were repeated. At about the :19 point, the Fire Station music is played but with the added harps gliss. At the :32 point, as indicated in “Fire Station,” we hear the violins and violas playing measured trem (16ths) while VC/CB play quarter notes. The xylophone is NOT heard this time around. At the 1:06 point (I believe Bar 38), this equates to page 49 of the score where the xylophone sounds Line 2 E-Eb 16ths (followed by an 8th rest) to Eb-D 16ths (followed by an 8th rest) to D-Db 16ths (followed by an 8th rest) to C to C 16ths, etc. Violins play contrary motion 16th note figures. Then in Bar 42 (1:13) all strings (except CB) are trill on small octave A dotted half note (to Bb) to Ab-A 16ths to “3” triplet value C-B-Bb triplet 16ths to (Bar 43) Bb dotted half note trill, and so forth.

“The Books” (track # 23). As I wrote in my old rundown: “...Note: The music that is played in the first 13 full seconds is *not* from this cue. Rather it is from a later cue (XXXI) titled “T.V. Aerials.” Why it was inserted here, I do not know...Another curious note is that “The Books” was originally written with the use of the harps and xylophone, but for some reason Herrmann decided to exclude them, making it a strings soli cue (which is still quite effective). But this cue begs for a rerecording of the way it was originally intended.”

I believe the Tribute gang did indeed record the original version that includes harps and xylophone but unfortunately they did not put it on the cd. I would’ve gladly dispensed with “Walking Distance” if they needed room for this alternate version (and more room for other alternate version cues as indicated). Oh, well...It’s not truly a 100% “complete” recording of the score...

The Tribute tempo is precisely the same as Herrmann’s original version, and very nice *con moto* performance.

“The Hose” (track # 24). The last five bars or so of this cue were dialed out in the edit of the movie but restored here in the Tribute cd. Another burning pants cue!

“Flames” (track # 25). Another messed up cue in terms of the written music pages being cut and missing. The cue ends on a hybrid chord (probably of F minor). CB plays Great octave F# whole note held fermata, VC on Great octave C, violas on small octave

C, violins II on small octave Ab, and violins I on middle C whole note *sf* > and held fermata. Nice, unnerving cue and ending!

“The Basket” (cue # 26). If I recall correctly, the last two bars or so of the cue were dialed out in the movie (although the asterisk is not placed on the Tribute cd cue). The tempo correlation is the same (maybe Stromberg is about a second faster).

“The Reading” (track # 27). Montag gives the ladies a forced reading of a poignant novel passage (*David Copperfield*). Obviously Montag did not have a chance yet to read the old adage, “ You can lead a horse to water but can’t make him drink!” Linda’s friends did not want to drink from the well of written prose. Same tempo as Herrmann’s. Nicely played.

“The Nightmare” (track # 28). The end ten bars of this cue were deleted in the picture but restored beautifully in this cd. Stromberg’s tempo is faster than Herrmann’s by about two and three seconds.

“The Skylight” (track # 29). Only the first five bars (about 18 seconds) saw the skylight of day in the movie. The rest of the music was thrown in the darkness of unrealized (but thankfully restored in the Tribute cd). It’s not an important cue but it’s nice to be able to hear it all.

“The Windows” (track # 30). Just about the same tempo. Almost neutral little cue.

“TV Aerials” (track # 31). If you recall from what I mentioned earlier, the opening of the earlier cue, “The Books,” is precisely from this cue. In the scene, Montag asks a neighbor lady of Clarisse’s where she and her father are. She points out how they were special and taken away because they had no television antennas on their roof. Simple minor chords (D min to Eb min) for a minor cue.

“The Photos” (track # 32). Stromberg’s conducting is decidedly faster than Herrmann’s, and the speed seems to pick up as you go along in the cue. For instance, at the start of Bar 4 it is :12 for the Herrmann version but :10 for Stromberg’s. In Bar 7 it is :23 for Herrmann but :19 for Stromberg. By the start of Bar 16 with the new end section, it is 1:01 for the Herrmann version but :51 for Stromberg (or 50 and ½). Sounds mighty fine but I think I prefer the slower pacing myself.

“The File” (track # 33). A suspenseful scene as the Captain approaches closer and closer to his office where Montag is still looking for pin-up glossies of Clarisse! In the film, Bar 11 was deleted (probably to make room for the final edit of the tight suspense scene). The tempo is about the same as Herrmann’s (about a second quicker in the Tribute cd).

“Vertigo” (track # 34). Clever music-making by Herrmann (as discussed in my rundown), especially in regards to Bar 1 when Montag faints (Herrmann actually mickey-

mouses here!). Tribute's version is slightly slower than Herrmann's by about one and two seconds but the clarity is fantastic.

"Information" (track # 35). Tribute's version is a bit slower than Herrmann's. However, end Bar 11 was not used in the finale of the movie (but restored here). No asterisk was placed on the cue. Violins here play *sf* > Line 1 E whole note held fermata, while violins II play small octave B, violas on small octave F, VC on Great octave Ab/small octave Db, and CB on small octave Db. Strange ending, basically quartal harmony (such as B up to E, Ab up to Db).

"The Vase" (track # 36). This cue was self-borrowed a year later for the Truffaut film, *The Bride Wore Black*, cue XV, Bars 1-10. Scene: Montag intercepts Clarisse, going to her boarded up house to search for a list of names her father had in a vase.

The tempo is almost exactly the same as Herrmann's. Nice spirited performance.

"The Mirror" (track # 37). About a second slower only in speed.

"Fire Engine" (track # 38). Same tempo/duration. You'll note, however, that in the movie version (heard in my Soundstage cd, for instance) the cue is almost all strings soli except towards the end—even though Herrmann wrote in the battery. Tribute recorded as written. For example, in Bar 9 (:13) you hear the marimba start to play—but not in the film version. I'll have to dig out my dvd to see if it's in there but I doubt it if the Soundstage cd reflects the cue. Then soon you have the xylophone and harps playing as well (but not in the movie)...Yes, I just verified that from the dvd (start 1:32:17). The Tribute performance is still on fire.

"Farewell" (track # 39). Shortest cue of the score (only three bars) as Linda takes her suitcase (full of Montag's books??) and leaves him forever.

"Flame Thrower" (track # 40). This cue was deleted in the final edit of the picture. Intended scene: When Montag takes the flamethrower and torches his bed and the wall television. Tribute forgot to add the double crosses to indicate "entire cue cut from film." McNeely also recorded this cue (track # 8). The tempo is just about the same as Stromberg's. Which version do I like better? It's difficult to say initially because both gentlemen did a good job. I would say I would have to edge towards Stromberg's simply because the recording is a bit better here, although I liked the clarity of the violins initially in the beginning bars of the McNeely recording (but not as good by Bar 9 at about the :15 point where the mikes picked up noises from the orchestra). The harps were also heard better in the Stromberg recording, both recordings picked up the vibe action pretty well. Overall I'd give thumbs up on both recordings and conductors for this cue.

[resume session Thursday, December 6 at 8:36 am. Day off. Rain tonight & tomorrow. Hoping my Varese-Sarabande *North by Northwest* cd is in today's mail]

"Flowers of Fire" (track # 41). This is also a frequently performed cue. McNeely has his own version in track # 7 of the Varese-Sarabande cd. His version is fine but the

harps are not heard very clearly (unlike Tribute's version). Both versions, however, do not accentuate the rising and falling 16ths and 8ths figures (violas and celli respectively) as Herrmann's version effectively did. The best version of the three of course goes to Herrmann's original version—not necessarily his London/Phase Four rerecording just before he died. I have the cd format that I just now listened to and Herrmann is rather imponderably slow in his tempo that really makes this beautiful cue seem a lot more ponderous this time around. For example, at the start of Bar 9, the original version had the timing location at :22 while McNeely and Stromberg have it almost right there at :23. But in the Herrmann London/Phase 4 recording it is located at :36! The entire cue there runs 1:52 as opposed to the 1:16 to 1:18 duration of the Stromberg and McNeely versions respectively.

“The Captain's Death” (track # 42). McNeely's version is a bit slower than Stromberg's and Herrmann's. Moreover the harps are weakly registered on the track—but I like the strings' action. At the beginning of Bar 9, the McNeely version is located at :16, whereas Stromberg & Herrmann at :15. By Bar 17 the difference is two seconds (:30 to :28), and then at the end of the cue the difference is now about six seconds difference. Once again the winner of the two is Stromberg. Both would've been equal in quality if it wasn't for the balance problem in the Varese-Sarabande recording.

“Freedom” (track # 43). Note that this cue was butchered in the final edit of the film. In fact, the first 64 bars were deleted (1:04 duration) so that you only hear Bars 65 thru part of Bar 97 before the music is dialed out thru Bar 109 again. Happily the entire cue is restored by the Tribute gang! The tempo was slightly faster in the Tribute version. Herrmann tended to accentuate the basses a bit more. For instance, when the CB enter in on the Great octave Ab half note in Bar 86 (1:29), Herrmann's version was somewhat more pronounced.

“The Railway” (track # 44). Note that the first ten bars of this cue in the movie were deleted. Fortunately this beginning section of excellent jarring music by Herrmann was restored by the Tribute team.

“The Road” (track # 45). Very beautiful cue. My wife says “It's lovely” and hence is a good candidate for a favorite cue of many women of this score! The tempo is the same in all recordings (even for the London/Phase Four recording!). It's a tossup what version I like the “best” (Stromberg or McNeely) because both are quite good. The Tribute version has a bit more clarity and sharpness (newest release of modern technology, I suppose) but the Varese-Sarabande version has a certain mellowness of sound I like.

“First Snows of Winter” (track # 46). See below...

“Finale” (track # 47). The end of “The Road” cue has a V.S. segue into the “Finale” written in, but for some reason the Tribute version starts it off differently (probably because of inserted music in the movie version that I need to check up on my dvd now...). Yes, I just checked. The added music is at the 1:50:02 point starting (“as the

first snows of winter fell” scene). Well, this inserted music is actually seven bars from “The Monorail” (the altered version) with the bowed trem strings and the glock sounding. While it is in the movie, I don’t think it fits the proper sequence as originally intended on paper by Herrmann. That is, originally “The Road” was supposed to segue seamlessly into “The Finale” (as McNeely did it). So it’s a judgment call for Tribute to include it on the cd. In fact, they actually have that repeated Monorail music segue into the Finale (no pause). It’s okay but by so doing they actually themselves deleted the transition end bar from “The Road” that the violins played to segue into “The Finale.” So while I like the recorded sound of Tribute’s Finale, I much prefer the McNeely proper sequence (as written by Herrmann) of the Road into the Finale. The mood is not broken in the Varese-Sarabande suite-like sequencing, whereas it is indeed broken by the artificial entry of the “First Snows of Winter” repeat music. Anyway, did Herrmann approve of that entry in the film or was it Truffaut’s doing (as it was in *The Bride Wore Black* sequencing)?? I suspect it was Truffaut’s doing!

SEA HAWK REVIEW

[2:15 pm Thursday] My wife and I went out for breakfast/lunch. When we returned home the mail had arrived—but not my *North by Northwest* cd. I suspect it is being delayed by the *Magic Fire* part of my complete order. Since I have to wait, I will spend the free time I have at this moment and receive another recently released cd. As I write I am watching the *Sea Hawk* dvd, so it’s logical that I review the Naxos 2-cd set of *The Sea Hawk* (with *Deception*), Bill Stromberg conducting the Moscow Symphony Orchestra once again.

As I wrote on Talking Herrmann October 28th, I said that if the M.I. recording is as good as what I heard so far of THE SEA HAWK, then it looks very promising that the cd will be both a popular and critical success. The only cue that I did not like was, unfortunately, the Donna Maria Song (Track # 15, CD 1). The singer, Irina, on the cd did an almost labored rendition, especially with that deep accent. I don’t know if it was Russian or simulated Spanish but it detracted from my enjoyment of the piece originally (and in another rerecording). It was not a good fit. Otherwise I enjoyed the other tracks I managed to listen to. ...

“...There is nothing startling about what I said. If indeed the Moscow talent agency hired to pick the singer for the Dona Maria song listened to the original tapes, and their job was to find a good match, then the end result was that Irina (fine singer that she is) was certainly not a good match for THAT particular piece COMPARED to the original. Too bad soloist singer Carol Wetzell (who did the song very admirably in the Korngold produced version for Varese conducted by Kojian) wasn’t in Moscow at the time! Carol was also true to the manner of singing set forth in the original presentation in the movie (go to Chapter 24 in the dvd starting at the 1:26:22 point of the movie).

“Of course you have to work with what you have available when in Moscow. This is understandable. It’s just the singing was not a good “fit,” unfortunately. When I received your nice two-cd set from SAE, the very first track I listened to was the Dona Maria song

because it happens to have a soft spot in my appreciation and memory of the score. I liked the orchestra playing (more distinct than the old Utah Symphony performance) but Irina's singing stuck out like a sore thumb for me (and that's why I gave it a sore thumb's down review). It was immediately noticeable. Other people mentioned this in another film music discussion board, I see. Other reviewers may love it, but I prefer keeping to the authenticity of the originally-intended performance that "sounded" very very pleasing. Irina's rendition was much deeper in tone, and also slower than the original (1:02 duration when the singing started; :57 for the Wetzel version; but :50 for the movie version). That's fine but the accent was very difficult to assimilate, and most of the time I could not understand the words. It was a major distraction and took away from the easy listening pleasure of the piece. Whereas the Carol Wetzel version was quite enjoyable, perhaps even more inflective and feminine than the original mono version in the movie...."

Now: The next cue I listened to is a favorite of many listeners: the Jungle March cue (cue 38). This is located in track # 10 of the Utah recording, track # 14 starting at :39 of the Stromberg recording,, and Chapter 19 in the dvd. This cue is a percussive highlight distinctly remembered because of the exotic instrumentation, including the gorde, shakes, temple blocks, rhumba drum, and so forth. When I first watched the movie, this cue really caught my attention! That specific percussive section starts at the :27 point in the Utah version in track # 10 (thru 1:07); the 1:07 point in track # 14 of the Naxos version (thru 1:52), and Chapter 19 in the dvd. The Naxos version is a bit slower (about 5 seconds) compared to the Utah-Varese version. I noticed at the :44 thru :52 section of the Utah version, the saxes are quite noticeable and highlighted (very nice effect!), whereas at the 1:26 thru 1:26 section of the Naxos version, the saxes are not as distinct, rather muted in the background. Overall, however, while I like the Utah version, I prefer expanded clarity of the MSO version. The percussive effects are generally far more upfront and high fidelity, and 'louder.'...."

Now: I am still watching the dvd of *Sea Hawk*. At this moment I'm at the scene where Thorpe is privately speaking to the Queen (about the 42 minute point into this excellent movie). Overall I consider the Stromberg/MSO cds a swashbuckler performance for a famous swashbuckler film and score. I would give it a high rating indeed. We have the original tracks to compare (alas mono) and also the Varese-Sarabande album produced by George Korngold, Varujan Kojian conducting the Utah Symphony Orchestra. I also have that 8:06 suite conducted by James De Priest (the Oregon Symphony) that came out in the Delos cd along with Korngold's Symphony in F#.

"Main Title" (track # 1). The original tracks and Kojian's version match exactly (1:55) while the Naxos version is 2:06. The slowest is DePriest's version at 2:21 (whose version slows down markedly at the start of the love theme section (:42 in the Tribute cd). I actually like them all, although the Naxos version has the best clarity. In fact, I would rate the "sound" of this cd even better than the *Mysterious Island* cd that came out a year after in the premiere of the Tribute label. Perhaps, once again, this had to do with the "unorthodox" arrangement in the latter score while I surmise that *Sea Hawk* had a more orthodox miking arrangement.

[Map on Wall] or ["Spain: King and Alvarez"] Reel 1/B. CD location: start of track # 2. Dvd location: 0:03:04. I like this cue a lot, especially now that you can hear it distinctly in the Naxos cd! I discuss the music in detail in my rundown of the score. The opening bass clarinet in the grace bar comes out very nicely and so does the solo clarinet taking over the line. Very nicely played by the players at MSO. The sordini horns can be heard well in Bar 4 (a little less so in Bars 7-8 but probably because the strings now also play the chord). The tambourine (etc) are heard clearly, and especially the harp, and the gong in Bar 9. There is a slight harshness to the high violins in Bars 10-13 (:20 point of the track) but we have a fortissimo here.

[The Shuttlecock Game] or [Dona Maria] Reel 1/C. CD location: track # 2 starting at 1:23. Dvd location: 0:04:30. Nice playful cue and spritely played by the orchestra. The bells and muted trumpet I are heard clearly, and strings are very good. Nice easiness or élan to this performance.

[Lookout Aloft] or ["Alvarez-Lopez"] Reel 1/D (cue # 4). CD location: Start of track # 3. Dvd location: 0:04:50. Scene: Immediately after Captain Lopez catches the ball. The booklet notes here are incorrect. It states that this cue is still on track # 2, as well as "The Slaves" cue. Both start track # 3. The Varese-Sarabande recording also represents this cue (unlike the last two cues) but not the first several bars. IN Bar 14 (:34 Naxos; :21 track # 2 Kojian) Lopez says to Alvarez, "They say the devil blows in their sails." Both versions are fine but, once again, the Naxos recording seems to have more clarity.

[Raise the Beat] or ["The Slaves"] Reel 1/E (cue # 5). CD location: track # 3 starting at 1:06. In the Kojian cd it is located in track # 2 starting at 0:51. Both versions are quite fine. Just maybe I'll give the Naxos version a slight edge in terms of high fidelity. The playing in both are very good.

[Prepare for Attack] Reel 1/F (cue # 6). CD location: Track # 3 starting at 2:34. This cue is not represented in the Kojian version. Scene: The Captain prepares for a battle and advises Don Alvarez to get below.

[Raise the Beat to Twenty] Reel 1/G (cue # 7). CD location: Track # 3 starting at 3:45. This cue is not represented in the Kojian cd. Surprisingly this time, Stromberg's conducting is now a bit ponderous with the tempo of this cue compared to Korngold's. Considering that the scene was to increase the beat more than twice the beat as before, the music would reflect that hastening beat too. Instead, Stromberg's tempo is actually slower. From Bar 1 to the start of Bar 5, Korngold plays it in 13 seconds, whereas Stromberg does it in 20 seconds. It *sounds* good but I think it would've been better to reflect the speed of the original tracks—even though the tempo-marking states *Pesante, ma agitato*. *Pesante* is not slower, just "heavy." Once again I like the performance but prefer a faster tempo (as expected).

“The Albatross” Reel 2/A (cue # 8). CD location: start of track # 4. Kojian cd location: track # 2 starting at 2:06. The tempo in both recording is pretty much the same. And I like both performances very much here. Really an excellent and famous cue/scene.

[Battle] Reel 2/B (cue # 9). CD location: Track # 4 starting at 1:44. Nice spirited performance.

[Cannon Fight] Reel 2/C (cue # 10). I believe this starts at 3:21 of track # 4 but I’m not sure.

[Cease Cannon Fire] Reel 2/D (cue # 11). CD location: track # 4 starting at 3:47. Very nice to hear.

[Hard Over Starboard] Reel 2/E (cue # 12). CD location: track # 4 starting at 4:51. The Albatross men prepare using grappling hooks, ready with swords to jump aboard the Spanish ship.

[Deck Battle] Reel 2/F (cue # 13).

[Thorpe Sword Fights] Reel 2/G (cue # 14). CD location: Track # 4 starting at 7:50. More *Furioso* action music! But only a page long that seques to the next action cue.

[Your Ship’s Sinking] Reel 2/H (cue # 15). CD location: Track # 4 starting at 7:56.

[Convincing the Trumpeter] Reel 2/I (cue # 16). CD location: Track # 4 starting at 8:33. Trumpet call.

[Salvage] or [Slaves Release] Reel 3/A (cue # 17). 14 pages. CD location: Start of track # 5. The romantic music occurs on page 7 (:50 cd) when Thorpe tells Dona Maria and Alvarez to be so kind to step aside. Strings are *espressivo*.

[Disembarking] Reel 3/B (cue # 18). CD location: Track # 5 starting at 2:46. Scene: Thorpe says, "Mr. Pitt, this young lady, I hope, will change her mind. If she doesn't, change it for her and have her carried aboard."

[Ship Sinks] Reel 3/C (cue # 19).

[Fanfare for England & Queen] Reel 3/D (cue # 20).

[Banquet] Reel 3/D (cue # 21). CD location: Start of track # 6.

[“All’s Well”] or “Love Scene on the Boat”] Reel 4/A (cue # 22). CD location: Start of track # 7. Kojian cd: start of track # 4.

[Queen’s Court] Reel 4/B (cue # 22). Ten pages. Scene: Right after the sailor exclaims "England!" the music seques here with the timp trill roll *mf* on low E (half to 8th notes).

["The Seven Sea Hawks"] Reel 4/C (cue # 23). Five pages. CD location: Start of track # 8. *Marcia* in C time.

[The Monkey] Reel 4/D (cue # 25). Seven pages. Naxos location: Track # 8 starting at :36. Kojian cd: Start of track # 5. Both versions are excellent but I suppose the Naxos version has a bit more clarity and fullness, especially the percussion.

["I'm Not Finished With You"] Reel 5/A (cue # 26). 13 pages.

[Dialog with Queen] Reel 5/B (cue # 27). 32 pages.

[Thorpe's Plan To Plunder] or [Map of Panama] Reel 5/C (cue # 28). CD location: Track # 9. Kojian cd: Start of track # 6.

[Rose Garden] Reel 6/A (cue # 29). 14 pages. CD location: Track # 10.

[Preparation To Leave] Reel 6/B (cue # 30). Four pages. CD location: Start track # 11.

[The Chart Maker] Reel 6/C (cue # 31). Five pages. CD location: Track # 11 starting at :58. Scene: Thorpe commissions a chart maker in town to make a chart of the Isthmus of Panama.

[Belt of Orion] or [Astronomer] Reel 6/D (cue # 32). Five pages (pp. 297-301). CD location: Track # 11 starting at 1:56. Another excellent, moody (*Misterioso*) cue and scene.

["You're Feeling Very Happy, Uncle?"] or [The Chess Game] Reel 7/A (cue # 33). Thirteen pages. CD location: Start of track # 12.

[Coach To Dover] Reel 7/B (cue # 34). 23 pages. CD location: Track # 12 starting at 1:52. The chimes still strike here in the beginning but that was added (in the scene in the movie).

[Farewell] Reel 7/C (cue # 35). 18 pages.

[Panama] Reel 7/D (cue # 36). ???

[The Right Trail] Reel 7/E (cue # 37). Three pages, music similar to Thorpe's Plan music. CD location: Start of track # 13.

[Jungle March] or [Gold Caravan] Reel 8/A (cue # 38). CD location: Track # 13 starting at :42. The famous sequence with all that percussive effect starts at the 1:25 point of this track (or the :28 point of track # 10 of the Kojian cd). You really hear the small gong starting at 2:01 or 2:02. Interesting sound.

[Dismount, Please!] or [Attack] Reel 8/B (cue # 39). 3 pages. CD location: Start of track # 14.

[Under Protest, Mr. Thorpe!] Reel 8/C (cue # 40). 2 pages. CD location: Track # 14 starting at :18 with the stopped horns followed by the celeste and high strings.

[Ready To Move] Reel 8/D (cue # 41). 12 pages. CD location: Track # 14 starting at :26. You really hear distinctly the tambourine at the 1:03 point (mid-page 3 of the written cue). More percussive effect follows (as in the Gold Caravan cue).

[Sneak Attack] Reel 8/E (cue # 42). 18 pages.

[The Swamp] Reel 8/F (cue # 43).

[Hacking] Reel 9/A (cue # 44).

[???] Reel 9/B (cue # 45).

[The Sea] or [Ocean] Reel 9/C (cue # 46). 12 pages. CD location: Track # 14 starting at 7:20. Scene: Finally Thorpe and his remaining crew reach the shore and see the Albatross out in the bay.

[Welcome, Captain Thorpe!] Reel 9/D (cue # 47). One page only. CD location: Track # 14 starting at 11:21. There is an overlap from the previous cue.

[The Trail] Reel 9/E (cue # 48).

[The Galleys] Reel 9/F (cue # 49).

[Whipping Beat] Reel 9/G (cue # 50).

[Dona Maria's Song] Reel 9/H (cue # 51). 4 pages, 23 bars. CD location: Start of track # 15. Wonderful clarity of sound but I try to avoid this cue because of the singer selected. I just cannot get used to her deepness of voice and accent! No offense meant. It's nothing like the movie and the Kojian recording.

[Talk with Queen] Reel 10/A (cue # 52). CD location: Track # 15 starting at 1:02.

[My Child] Reel 10/B (cue # 53).

[Remove That Man's Portrait] Reel 10/C (cue # 54).

[Dona Maria Cries] Reel 10/D (cue # 55).

[Important Dispatch] Reel 10/E (cue # 56). CD location: CD II, track # 1 starting at 2:16.

ETC. Skipping....

[Thorpe's Reflection On Cup] or {Knife Fight] Reel 12/A (cue # 65). CD location: CD II, start of track # 4. Eight pages.

[We're Getting Under Way] or [Happy Sailing] Reel 12/B (cue # 66). CD location: Track # 5. Also track # 14 "Escape from the Galley" in the Kojian cd starting at 2:59.

Skipping...

["Stop It!"] Reel 13/F (cue # 75). Here Thorpe has already dispatched Wolfingham to another Court, and now the palace guards are dueling with him. Luckily the Queen appears on time and intervenes. CD location: Track # 8 (CD II) starting at 4:31.

[Queen Fanfare] Reel 13/G(cue # 76).CD location: Start of track # 9 (CD II).

[Queen's Speech] Reel 13/H

[I Pledge You Ships] Reel 13/J (cue # 78). CD location: track # 9 starting at 1:43. Kojian: Track # 17 starting at :25.

[Sunday, December 9, 2007 at 9:06 am]

North by Northwest CD Review (McNeely conducting)

After work yesterday I happily discovered that my Varese-Sarabande order finally arrived (*North by Northwest* and *Magic Fire*). I immediately opened it and listened quickly (my wife and I had to get ready to go downtown) to "The Highway"(track # 21). It is the premiere recording of this unused "lesser" cue. I say lesser because it is basically a functional cue delegated to the background as a more-or-less neutral long cue to underscore the barren highway landscape. The consistently beating timp acts in effect as a cue-long drone, not much unlike that famous scene in *The Bride of Frankenstein*.

After our little excursion downtown (where at *Acres of Book* I was lucky to find for \$10 the out-of-print Dover full score of Verdi's *Falstaff*), I listened to *North by Northwest* (NbyNW) a few times, and as I write I am listening to it on my portable cd player with the special Sony earplugs. Overall I am pleased. While it is not an outstanding Five-Star recording (some technical issues with loudness/bass and hiss at times), it is nevertheless a very decent one, and a fine performance. I would give this one a four-star rating.

First of all, I am relieved to say that there are no obvious mess-ups in this cd (ala TZ's "The Lonely" and *Marnie* "Prelude" etc). They seemed to have done their homework and proof-reading tasks. Remember that everybody makes mistakes. Mistakes are the price of growth where you learn from them and move on to something better. Well, I think this recording qualifies as "something better." McNeely's reading of the

score is attentive, showing good empathy with the work. I am convinced that he demonstrated here in this interpretation a commitment to be faithful to Herrmann's music.

In the moderately-sized booklet, McNeely wrote: "We recorded this CD in a large concert hall in Bratislava, Slovakia. This setting provides a very lush and beautiful sound with a great deal of space for the orchestra to resonate in. But in the course of constantly going back to the original soundtrack, which was recorded in a smaller sound-stage, the immediacy and smaller space of the original gives it a certain characteristic and color which is an important aspect of the score. And so, in remixing this, I choose to grab the faders with the close mics and push, push, push..."

I am not sure what he meant by "push, push, push" since I am not wholly familiar with recording engineer lingo, but overall I think he did a good job in manipulating that close miking ambiance. It did not work all the time. For example, "Pad and Pencil" (cue # 27) to my ears had this tendency in the beginning cells to fade in and fade out, as if the volume was being manipulated purposefully. Perhaps it was simply the actual recording session since the strings in Bar 1 played *p* (piano) followed in Bar 2 with its repeat but in the *pp* (pianissimo) dynamic. But I wonder if it wasn't manipulated later in the remixing. I think it was a good intention to create this nuance but to me it seemed to bring too much attention to the sudden change the way it turned out. I understand from purists that this practice in the mixing desk to "push" or "pull up" various instruments is rather unnatural, best compensated initially by special placement of the players, strategic miking, and so forth. Sometimes the pushing works, and sometimes it doesn't—especially if the fading up or fading down creates an out-of-balance feeling. Some of the other instruments may not be getting a fair hearing if others are too accentuated and "upfront." Perhaps it should be used with discretion and then otherwise leave well enough alone. Happily the attempts appeared to be far more successful in this remixed cd than mildly unsuccessful. Certainly nothing really noticeably offensive or unpleasant was detected. Overall the transparency was good. You did not have the acoustic quality problem as evident in the *Torn Curtain* recording where you had confused, blurred, reverbed details and textures.

The most noticeable anomalies technically appears to be the pickup of unwanted noises frequently (especially when the woodwinds are playing) and the less occasional tendency for the slight harshness of tone when basses are prominent. I'll be giving examples when I provide a rundown of the cues. Other than these minor recording/mixing drawbacks, this cd is a notable entry in a faithful rendition of a classic score by Bernard Herrmann. I definitely give it a thumb's up, a hearty recommendation. My initial reaction was less enthusiastic but I got to like it more & more as I listened to the music several more times. Whereas in the Broughton *Jason* recording and the Stromberg *Fah 451* recording, I liked it immediately and fully and *enthusiastically*!

Now: Some people commented on how they don't plan to buy this cd because, after all, they have the original tracks cd from Rhino, and they have the excellent dvd with the isolated music tracks. So why bother to spend the money? Well, I would definitely dissuade them from this sentiment because this new Varese-Sarabande cd is

worth the investment. I'm happy with it (and I can get fussy!). Moreover, many of the cues were restored as originally written. That should be another great incentive to buy this new cd. For instance, the end seven bars of "Car Crash" were not used in the final edit of the picture. Of course the unused *complete* cue of "The Highway" is presented here for the first time.

The cd booklet of 16 pages is half the size of the Tribute booklets but nevertheless attractive (especially Matt Peak's cover art) and informative (especially Chris Husted's notes that take up half the booklet). The cover art could very well also be applicable to the upcoming *National Treasure* movie! On page 2 you get to see a photo of Joel McNeely and Robert Townson, a photo that has a really nice glow and golden texture ambiance. I never saw a picture of Robert Townson before, so it was interesting to see it (I assumed he was a lot older!:) In the liner notes, he did not mention why the Royal Scottish National Orchestra was no longer their happy recording home. I am glad he and McNeely are doing the periodic Nightmare Romance concerts (the next one in Chicago, April 2008). It would be nice if they played some of the previously unheard CBS scores Herrmann composed such as "Studio One," "House on K Street," "Kitty Shot," and "Nathan Hale" (among several others). McNeely just the other day posted on his site an informal straw poll to see what film music fans out there would love to hear next (and pay for by buying the cd!). Here's the link:

http://web1.joelmcneely.com/blog/music/2007/12/straw_poll.php#comments

As I commented on a Talking Herrmann post:

- "1.)LION & THE HORSE (Steiner)
- 2.)PARRISH (Steiner)
- 3.)HERRMANN CBS MUSIC: "Kitty Shot" (Gunsmoke); Nathan Hale;Studio One; Desert Suite; Police Force; House on K Street; Knife in the Darkness (Cimarron Strip);etc)
- 4.) CRIME CLASSICS Suites (Herrmann)
- 5.)FRED STEINER tv scores: "The Squaw" (Gunsmoke);various STAR TREK;"Quiet Night In Town" (HGWT); "Call Me Dodie" (Gunsmoke)

"The least expensive proposal would be Herrmann's CRIME CLASSICS. Suites can be compiled from various of the better episodes/scores, eliminating fragment cues. A good episode/score is "The Terrible Deed of Doctor Webster" that utilizes a clarinet, horn and harp.

- "The Younger Brothers" (Jan 27, 1954): 3 horns.
- "Blackbeard's 14th Wife" (Nov 11, 1953): 3 horns and timp
- "Death of a Picture Hanger" 3 trombones
- "Borgia" 3 trombones and tuba.
- "Billy the Kid" 3 trumpets & harp.
- "Your Loving Son, Nero" bass clarinet/clarinet, harp, glock, timp, solo horn, cymbals, xylophone, shakers,

“Plus many other scores available at UCLA Music Library Special Collections (I already researched them back in the Nineties).

“The next cost-effective alternative is the Herrmann CBS scores. Several would be World Premiere recordings such as "House on K Street," "Nathan Hale," "Kitty Shot," and "Studio One. All the written scores are at UCLA as given. Gunsmoke's "Kitty Shot" is especially interesting. I have an old VHS of the episode when Columbia House offered Gunsmoke episodes years ago. Many DESERT SUITE cues never saw the light of day, none of POLICE FORCE, etc.

“Similarly cost effective would be Fred Steiner scores. He is almost never represented.

“Max Steiner is having a resurgence these last years. One of my favorite scores is LION & THE HORSE. Action music, dramatic music, comedic music, touching music--you name it, it's all here. PARRISH is great fun full of lovely melodies. I like this score better than A SUMMER PLACE, in fact.

Other alternatives would be Jerry Goldsmith tv scores. A good candidate would be "The Tunnel" from Playhouse-90 that won a grammy I believe. Also various other CBS scores (all available at UCLA). "The Tunnel" was composed December 1959. Brass and percussion only.”

I don't know if *Lion & the Horse* is more than barely known by filmmusic fans (especially since it's not out on dvd and almost never on television) but it is a tremendously entertaining score that fully represents the many sides of Max Steiner. If McNeely never heard it, I'd be happy to send him an audio cassette of the movie when I recorded it many, many years ago. Perhaps Tribute would be interested—although they seem to be far more interested in Maxie's earlier works. The full score is there at USC/Warner Bros Archives. I researched it back in the late Eighties and had some representative pages xeroxed. *Parrish* is also terrific, and *Miracle of Our Lady of Fatima*, and *Hanging Tree* (so many good ones to choose from!) but I think I'd give *Lion & the Horse* the first shot (if I had the money and resources, that is!).

Back to the NbyNW booklet after my digression....[4:41 pm]

After that two-page “Travels With Bernard Herrmann” by Townson, Chris Husted writes six pages worth of explanatory material on “North By Northwest.” He opens with: “*North By Northwest* has enjoyed a richly-deserved popularity since it was released in 1959, and remains the last of Alfred Hitchcock's fun-loving, stylish adventure films.” The score and film does indeed have a richly-deserved prominence in many people's lives. I know in my own very young life in that general period, I was influenced by several films whose film scores had an impact on me. Many people were *really* impacted by *Mysterious Island* (both the film and the score by Herrmann). After all, you had a Harryhausen special effects film with a soaring and volcanic score by Herrmann. I remember I purposely went to see the movie because of the music score by Herrmann. Before that, however, I was more or less “accidentally” introduced to Herrmann by *North*

By Northwest and especially *Journey To The Center of the Earth*. I think the latter film had the greatest impact on me. It had a special sense of wonder and atmosphere and mystique, whereas *N by NW* was a little too sophisticated and “talky” for my early youth that year (when I was nine). *Mysterious Island* was more outward and extroverted a movie (like *Seventh Voyage of Sinbad* that, incidentally, I never saw at its initial release but years later). Nevertheless in 1959 I remembered *North By Northwest*, especially the airplane scene in the prairie highway, the drunken car ride scene earlier, and most especially the Mount Rushmore long scene at the end. I was aware of the music too but not as much as *JTTCOTE* that had a lot more interesting scenes to keep me fascinated with as a kid, a greater inner or subjective nature that appealed to me. The music there made the film even more mysterious and moody. Another film score that year that caught my attention as a kid was Max Steiner’s *Hanging Tree*.

After a short historical perspective of the creation of the score, Husted then discusses the main themes of the score, starting with the *fandango* rhythm Overture. Although Chris did not discuss it in the liner notes, My contention (shared by a fellow poster who researched the score) is that Herrmann probably did not “originally” compose this music intended for the Overture. We think Herrmann first conceived of the music in “The Wild Ride” cue because you can see on the autograph score how Herrmann manipulated it. As I wrote in my rundown of the score over two years ago:

“When you examine the autograph score, you will notice that Herrmann simply covered over “The Wild Ride” title with this, the *N by N.W. O.* title. You can still see the “de” from “ride” after the *O.* (Overture) letter! So, put plainly, Herrmann in effect “self-borrowed” the Wild Ride cue (chase music) from Reel 3/part 1 to become the Overture (not the other way around). He did not compose the Overture first. It is conceivable in his sketches that perhaps he *did* write an Overture first but it may’ve been quite different in style, and he abandoned it for the more appropriate “Wild Ride” fandango-type music. Moreover, you can see the Production/cue numbers still intact as 1743-5 (Production # 1743; cue # 5). The cue “Kidnapped” was originally #1743-2 (the second cue of the score after the Overture). “The Streets” cue is marked as Reel 1/2 but also oddly designated as #1743-48. This is odd because “The Cliff” cue (also incorporating the Finale) is designated as Reel 16/3 and #1743-44. I believe a “Streets” scene was intended for the end of the movie when the couple returns to New York City...”

Whatever the situation, the music nevertheless “fits” in its odd but playful way, just as Chris discusses, considering the nature of the film. It would’ve been interesting if Herrmann orchestrated the guitar into this music since it would traditionally fit *fandango* music. Next Chris discusses the love theme used several times in the movie, and Kaplan’s theme (that Chris rightly states was self-borrowed from *On Dangerous Ground* (the “Snowstorm” cue). Then he discusses what he aptly calls the coquettish hurry music (or call it “travel” or transition music) that’s heard in the second cue (“The Streets”) and other cues. Then he discusses another theme that is a bit harder to characterize (“The Phone Booth” etc). Then he returns to a historical perspective again before he centers on an interesting (but somewhat puzzling, to me) discussion on what Chris refers to as Herrmann’s “frustrations with the dot.” I know what he’s talking about but, curiously, he

mentions two cues (“The Stone Faces” and “The Ridge”) that do not even have the 12/8 time signature that he writes about, let alone paired simultaneously with the C time signature. The former cue starts with the Cut time signature, then 6/4, and then back & forth with those two signatures. The latter cue also starts with the Cut time and then 6/4 time (those two settings only). So I am a bit confused why he is discussing this problem for this score and particularly those two cues when he stated that they “required extensive alteration to arrive at consistent meters.” In fact, I believe the only times Herrmann uses the 12/8 meter are the Kaplan cues such as “Kidnapped” starting in Bar 17. In Bar 71 of “The Ridge,” for example, the woodwinds and VC/CB are in Cut time playing descending half notes and then ascending half notes thru Bar 80, while the violins and violas are in 6/4 time playing in each bar six quarter notes ascending-descending. I suppose he could’ve had them in Cut time too and simply “3” triplet value bracket each pair of three notes but he chose to do it the 6/4 way and not “3” it all the time. So it wasn’t really a problem having such a dual-meter pairing. I have seen other film composers do the same thing.

I think another interesting oddity of Herrmann regarding “dots” was his tendency to use double-dotted whole notes. As I wrote in my Mysterious Island rundown re: “Clouds A” :

“...[NOTE: I find it highly peculiar that Herrmann would employ this oddity of notation (double-dotted whole notes). If Herrmann is using it, then I am sure there is precedent for it, but it is not “standard” notation. In 3/2 time, this means that you have three half notes (a whole note and half note full-bar duration). A dotted whole note (only one dot after the whole note) in this time signature means in effect a whole note tied to a half note because the dot increases the length of the note by half of its value. Obviously half of a whole note is a half note. If two dots are used after a note, the second note adds half the value of the first dot. So, in this case of the whole note, then strictly speaking (mathematically), a double-dotted whole note would equate to a whole note tied to a half note tied to a quarter note. This means that the original value note (the whole note) has been increased by three-fourths. Obviously the way Herrmann notates it is inexact. He really should be using a dotted whole note instead of a double-dotted whole note.

“The same applies in earlier cues in 12/8 time. Normally he would have the flutes, say, play a series of four 8th note figures (three 8th notes per crossbeam-connected figure). $4 \times 3 = 12$. But when occasionally they play whole-bar value notes (still in 12/8 time), Herrmann notates those bars as double-dotted whole notes. This is inexact, technically speaking. Each pairing of 8th notes would be a quarter note value, and since there are twelve 8th notes, these are reduced to 6 quarter notes, that are in turn reduced to three half notes, that are in turn to a whole note and a half note (or dotted whole note). On the surface, this would seem odd as well, but it makes more sense technically. Perhaps if he had a dotted half note tied to a dotted half note, then would *look* better. Now, if Herrmann utilized instead the C time signature and *then* made each triplet figure a “3” triplet figure (each figure of three 8th notes equal a quarter note), then that would work better overall. Then, when certain bars required a full-bar duration note, then a simple whole note would correctly suffice. Or, he can still use the 12/8 signature for the triplet 8th figures, but each time he needed to do a full-bar note; he could switch to C (or 4/4)

time. I just find his double-dotted whole note approach to be highly unusual and not very workable or exact (technically-speaking)....”

Herrmann also had this 12/8-C pairing in “The Abduction” cue of *Journey to the Center of the earth* as well as “Escape” and “Glade” in *Jason*, etc.

Normally or overwhelmingly Herrmann steadily used the common C or 4/4 time in his music, so he did not have any problems with that!

Then Husted talks about the challenge of reconstructing “On The Rocks.” While John Morgan is best associated as a reconstructionist, Chris also does good reconstruction work when necessary. I think he did a faithful job here.

Finally in the booklet, Joel McNeely writes about “Conducting Mr. Herrmann.” I think overall he conducted himself very well in this cd interpretation. Joel discusses the famous *fandango* type theme, and the dizzying construction of the interplaying sections of the orchestra. He then focuses briefly on the “Highway” cue. I tend to disagree with his analysis that it is a daring and suspenseful cue. At best I feel it is mildly suspenseful or, better yet, anticipatory. Otherwise I see it more as a functional “neutral” cue that utilizes one of Herrmann’s oft-used techniques of pyramid design music construction. It serves it’s purpose functionally but is not particularly memorable or important a cue.

North by Northwest Tracks

“Overture” (track # 1). McNeely captured the spirit and high-voltage nature of this music—plus it’s in dynamic modern standards digital stereo. Of course it’s going to “sound” a lot better and more detailed and alive than the old Rhino OST tracks. I heard somebody found better source material after the Rhino material so obviously the Rhino edition leaves much to be desired in terms of audio quality. The same applied to the *Journey to the Center of the Earth* OST tracks on cd. I heard source tapes of the music and they sound a *lot* better and more dynamic than the cd tracks. So I don’t know what the problem is. A problem with the new Varese-Sarabande cd track here is that when I heard it on my main stereo with four speakers (two are large), the sound got a little too “loud” and a bit harsh at the :10 point (Bar 17) and then especially at the :15 point (Bar 25) when the dynamic build occurs quickly. At first, as the music started, I needed to put up the volume higher than normally (unlike what I did for the *Fah 451* cd) but then I had to quickly turn down the volume dial a bit at the :15 because the loudness was creating a bit of a sound distortion. It was better on my portable cd player because the special Sony earplugs (good as they are in capturing basses, etc) aren’t quite as sensitive and loud as my speakers. I do not technically know what this condition is attributed to but it was pushed a bit too hard in the fortissimos here. Slightly disagreeable intensity that needed immediate adjustment (lowering of the volume). Otherwise the performance is excellent. I don’t believe any of the instrumental choirs got cheated of attention. The percussion came thru clear, the brass was healthy, and so forth. Like other action tracks coming up, the performance was boisterous but not hysterical or manic “too much” or over-extended. McNeely and the Slovak musicians did very well here. I just wish the technical side was

a bit more agreeable or moderate in the intensities discussed. As a side note, they used the film version ending of this Overture, not the latter concert version ending with the strings playing rapidly ascending 16th note figures and then glisses for two bars to the end bar rinforzando 8th note.

“The Streets” (cue # 2). Nearly indistinguishable from Herrmann’s own version. Same tempo, same lively performance—only better in terms of sound quality because of the better technology. Woodwinds and strings sound especially clear; horns a little less so.

“Kidnapped” (cue # 3). Fine performance.

“The Door” (cue # 4). Nice atmospheric “slow” cue. Varese restored the original length of the written cue of twelve bars. In the final edit of the movie, Bars 8 thru 11 were deleted. So I like the cue even better now! The muted horns sound perfectly clear here.

“Cheers” (cue # 5). Wow, this is a pretty interesting track here! You really get to hear the music unlike what you hear in the original track. Specifically go to :09 thru :16 (Bars 3-6) when the strings play the quick bowed trem figures. In the OST you basically hear the strings playing what sounds like three-note figures when you combine the violins I/violas and then violins II. Violins I top line, for instance, play Line 3 C to D 8ths (crossbeam connected) to E 8th (followed by a 16th rest and then a repeat of the figure). After a quarter rest, violins II top line play E to G notes. So, in this new recording, you hear the pattern as four-note combined figures (not three). It really picks it up distinctly (unlike the original tracks)—unless the original players did not perform it quite well...

“The Wild Ride” (track # 6). Exhilarating music played exuberantly here. I am listening to it as I write on my portable cd. Maybe later I’ll play it on the main speaker system—but my wife is now watching television in the room, so I better not interrupt! I wanted to hear if the loudness problem still existed with this fortissimo cue.

“Car Crash” (track # 7). Varese-Sarabande restored this cue as well. Note that Herrmann deleted Bars 11-17 (the *Lento* section) in the final edit of the film.

“The Return” (cue # 8). Fine.

“Two Dollars” (cue # 9). McNeely’s version is slightly slower than Herrmann’s (about two to three seconds). For instance, the start of Bar 17 is :18 for the Herrmann version but :20 for the McNeely version. No problem with that. Interestingly, in the written music at Bars 24-25 (about the :29 point), Herrmann has the celli and violas pizzicato (at least the viole). But in the actual original recording (and in the new recording) they are obviously bowed trem in effect. So apparently Herrmann changed the way they played at the recording session. Herrmann did something similar but far more obvious a change in “The Monorail” cue of FAH 451. In fact, Bill Stromberg just now commented (about 8 pm) on that cue on Talking Herrmann. The stopped horns of “Two Dollars” seemed a bit more emphasized or obvious in the last several bars of the OST but no big deal.

“The Elevator” (cue # 10). Good. Both had that pleading sense of the violins starting in Bar 23 (:23). Herrmann’s was :22 at this point so the tempo was pretty close.

“The U.N.” (track# 11). Several bars of this cue were deleted in the final edit of the film but restored in this new cd.

“Information Desk” (track # 12). Nicely performed cue. However, here’s an example of how the mikes (or ??) seemed to have picked up a sort of low level “hiss” of the clarinets in Bars 14 thru 25 (:13 thru :23) especially heard in the decay. It’s not particularly bad but noticeable on good speakers and tends to bring attention to it rather than the music. I guess the problem with close miking (if that’s the case here) is that it can pick up unwanted sounds with clarity too! Maybe (again, I’m not a technical expert!) but maybe it was a by-product of close miking (or ???) that contributes to the coarseness or semi-harshness of the sound of climaxes or fortissimos on sensitive speakers.

“The Knife” (track# 13). I noted a little bit of a distortion at the :03 point as the high woodwinds play in Bars 3-4—even in my portable cd—like the intensity was just a wee bit too overwhelming for the recording machines to assimilate properly. Otherwise the performance itself is nice and vibrant.

“Interlude” (track # 14). Very nice! The oboe is particularly clear, crisply detailed.

“Detectives” (track # 15). Fine short cue and performance.

“”Conversation Piece” (track # 16). All talk and almost no action in this “wordy” love scene. All formerly deleted 32 bars were restored by the Varese team. Imagine if the music had stayed on because the “love” scene was even longer and stayed intact as originally conceived. I don’t think even Herrmann’s beautiful music would’ve spared us the torture! Hence the edit.

“Duo” (track # 17). The first six bars of this cue were deleted in the OST but they were not completely restored in the new cd, curiously. In effect the first two bars were not played here. In the written score in Bar 1, the violas play small octave A 8th to A-A 16ths figure played twice and repeated next two bars to (Bar 4) G# notes in that pattern. After a quarter rest in Bar 1, the clarinet plays the love theme fragment followed in Bar 3 by the oboe. Well, if you listen to the track, you’ll hear that the oboe (not the clarinet) starts off the interplay. Moreover, apparently Herrmann changed the rhythmic pattern slightly because now instead of a steady playing of notes, every two bars it ends sooner followed by a rest.

“The Station” (track # 18). As I wrote in my old rundown: “...another section of “The Station” cue that you *hear* is not written on this cue; namely, the giocoso section similar to the pattern given in “Two Dollars” and “The Elevator” that here includes trumpets, etc. Actually this is the old cue, the first cue originally written and later discarded for “The Station (New)” of 70 bars. I surmise that Herrmann did not initially

intend to write for that giocoso scene about the detectives looking for the right red skycap (Roger disguised as one)....”

[resume session Monday, December 10 at 4:35 pm]

“The Phone Booth” (track # 19). Note: Five bars of this cue were not used in the movie but restored here. The performance is fine but once again we have that mildly annoying background “hiss” as the clarinets play. You hear it at :02 to :08 (Bars 1-2, then :18 to :22 (Bars 5-6), then :34 to :38 (Bars 9-10), and so forth. Again I am not a technician but it’s either caused by too close mixing or somehow the resonance has created some sort of feedback or ??? You don’t hear it in the old stereo Herrmann version.

“Farewell” (track # 20). At least three and a half bars were not used in the movie but restored here. Once again we have a bit of that underlying low hiss problem. Again it is more noticeable when the clarinets are playing soli.

“The Highway” (track # 21). Nice to hear this long but minor cue. Probably it was best that this music was not included in the prairie highway scene. Neutral or low-level suspense music.

“The Crash” (track # 22). Note that end Bars 95-114 were not used in the final edit of the film, although it was recorded because you can hear the complete cue in the Rhino cd. Dvd location: Chapter 26 starting at :34. You also hear the fully written cue in this Varese cd. However it is one of the poorer cues in this recording in terms of performance. Herrmann’s recording is better without a doubt. It starts off okay but then seems to get rushed. In Bars 21-24 (about :12 to :15) when the stopped horns/trumpets/trombones play, instead of the full value notes as Herrmann played them, the musicians play them more as staccato notes. The same applies to Bars 29-32 (:17-:19). Bars 33 thru 48 (all of page 62) is performed fine but then the horns in Bars 49-52 (:29-:31) and then Bars 56-60 (:34-:36) are weakly heard (unlike Herrmann’s version). The end section of *Allegro tranquillo* is fine, however.

“Hotel Lobby” (track # 23). Note that Bar 9 was deleted in the movie and recording (not in the Rhino cd)—basically more arpeggiando harps and tenuto flutes. However this was restored in the Varese cd. The tenuto flutes seemed (to my ears, anyway) a bit on the harsh side (perhaps a recording pick-up distortion). Also you still hear that hiss of the clarinets. So I am not that pleased with this track.

“The Reunion” (track # 24). Note that Bars 13-14 were not used in the movie and not recorded (not on the Rhino cd) but restored here. McNeely’s version is a little slower than Herrmann’s version. For instance, at the start of Bar 5 it is :18 for Herrmann but :21 for McNeely. Moreover, I find that Herrmann’s version had a bit more intensity and suggested passion in his rendition whereas this time around McNeely tended to have a more even, casual approach. I still like it but Herrmann’s rendition is better.

“Good-bye” (track # 25). Once again the low-level hiss annoyance since this cue only has the clarinets and bass clarinets playing. If it wasn’t for that slight but constant

background hiss, it would've been a right-on cue. The clarinets/bass clarinets here sound rich and full and warm.

"The Question" (track # 26). The strings join in playing response notes to the clarinets and bass clarinets playing (and mildly hissing somewhat!). Oh, well....

"The Pad & Pencil" (track # 27). I already discussed this earlier regarding the perceived fading down and then pushing up of the *pp* to *p* dynamics. I may be entirely wrong here and it's really just part of the performance but it appears a bit artificial or manipulated in terms of the mixing process. Not a major hassle but noticeable and mildly distracting to me. Otherwise I like the performance.

"The Auction" (track # 28). Nicely performed cue. There's that detectable underlying hiss at the beginning in Bars 1 and 3 as the clarinets play, and then it's okay. No hiss with that end solo bass clarinet on small octave Bb whole note.

"The Police" (track # 29). Excellent, spirited performance; great sound technically. Good job!

"The Airport" (track # 30). McNeely's version of this dynamic cue is slightly slower than Herrmann's but otherwise it sounds really pretty close to the OST. Good job. The hiss in bars 25-26 is not as noticeable, and not noticeable in the fast figures in Bars 7 thru 16.

"The Cafeteria" (track # 31). Very nice. There may be a slight intonation problem at the :04 point (the 2nd note of the triplet in Bar 3). Maybe not. Good, faithful rendition.

"The Shooting" (track # 32). Good but I think Herrmann's version is better. A little shaky at the end.

"The Forest" (track # 33). Very nice. Pretty darn close to the OST, and the solo cello is excellent. The clarinets are balanced perfectly with the strings in Bars 12-21, and you don't notice the low hiss from the clarinets (or clarinets' recording pickup) because the strings are there (maybe a little noticeable at the end bar).

"Flight" (track # 34). I like the emphasis dynamics here. It's a bit slower than Herrmann's but I liked the focusing. Probably a better take than even Herrmann's!

"The Ledge" (track # 35). Note that this cue was significantly altered by Herrmann by the time it went to the recording sessions. Bar 5 in the revised version would seem to include bowed trem quarter notes that utilize the *sul tasto* or the *sul ponticello* effect (and later on too). In the old version, however, you do not see this effect on the written cue. Instead we simply have a continuation of the previous four bars. Herrmann certainly made it more atmospheric and memorable! Unfortunately, this is one of the weakest or poorest cues in the McNeely recording, in my opinion. From :05 to :09 and then :14 to :18 just doesn't sound much like the original. Perhaps the revised written music was not available and the reconstructionist had to make a best guesstimate of the

effect that Herrmann wanted (and got in the OST) but did not here in the new cd pan out too faithfully. I don't know. End Bars 25 thru 33 are the best represented, however.

"The House" (track # 36). This is a very important and long cue in the film (and one of my favorites!). Well I feel that McNeely and musicians did a pretty good & faithful job here. He's actually faster than Herrmann's rendition, slightly at first by a second (such as Bar 42) or two and then getting a little bit faster towards the end. Now: I prefer to hear this cue on my Panasonic portable cd because the loudness and bass gets a little too intense on my normal speaker system, especially in the beginning *sff sforzando* loudness. Maybe my speakers are too sensitive or perhaps, I suspect, the balancing or equalizing in the mixing is not exactly right. Remember that in the very loud sequences I have to lower my volume knob and then have to put it back up in the quieter passages. With my portable I don't have to adjust. So it depends on the system you happen to have whether it sounds just right or not. At any rate, I feel that this is one of McNeely's best cues, at least in terms of the important cues.

"The Balcony" (track # 37). Good.

"The Match Box" (track# 38). This is a very important moody and atmospheric cue/scene. I think the Varese version is pretty good, very close to the original (which would have a slight edge). The only problem once again is that underlying hiss especially noticeable at the :07 to :10 and :14 to :18 point as clarinet I plays the sub-tone notes. Just a bit too obvious, but you can live with it.

"The Message" (track # 39). A lesser cue but nicely played here. Stopped horns are distinctly heard.

"The T.V." (track # 40). Good. Nice nuance of the distinctly heard timp.

"The Airplane" (track # 41). Good but I believe Herrmann's version has the edge for suspenseful urgency.

"The Gates" (track # 42). Bars 68-70 were deleted in the picture but restored here. I like this version but prefer the Herrmann version more (seems to have more dramatic emphasis).

"The Stone Faces" (track # 43). Exhilarating version! Terrific opening as the music plays the quartal harmonies. One of the best tracks on the cd, perhaps the showpiece track. Note that several bars were deleted/edited in the final version of the scene/cue, including Bars 42-45 (around the 1 minute location), and then Bars 50-56, and Bars 74-75—but gloriously and thankfully restored here. This track gets a Five Star rating. This music and track has more excitement than you can shake a baton at!

"The Ridge" (track # 44). Note that several bars were deleted in the final edit of the movie (not crossed-out bars penciled by Herrmann). This includes Bars 38-57 (when Eve falls and hurts herself). Apparently it was a longer scene originally shot but later

edited down. Also Bars 73-80 were deleted. Needless to say, they were all restored by Husted and McNeely and the musicians, and very nicely played too.

“On The Rocks” (track # 45). The music in the film actually starts on Bar 17 but thankfully Husted orchestrated the Varese version right at the true beginning. The orchestration seems quite faithful, and the performance is overall very good. There is a coordination problem here or there (such as at the :20 point by the flutes or Bar 33) but I liked the enthusiastic track. You can really hear the tuba notes as certain passages!

“The Cliff” (track # 46). I like this cue especially the interesting colors starting Bar 17 (:36). I like this track version but overall prefer the original tracks version conducted by Herrmann.

“Finale” (track # 47). Very good finale track for this cd. The tutti end bars are a bit overwhelming on my normal speaker system but that’s okay! [8:15 pm] Now I’m going to listen once again to the Tribute *Mysterious Island* cd.....

Incidentally, Matt has anew url site that may interest readers. Matt actually created this Film Score Rundowns site.

<http://matthewasprey.wordpress.com/>

Now to copy & paste my early November Talking Herrmann discussion on Wagner and Herrmann:

I finally reacquainted myself with Wagner’s four-part RING music this past week. My wife is on a short trip attending her niece’s wedding, and since she cannot take a steady diet of Wagner (especially with the heavy operatic singing!), I thought this would be a good opportunity to immerse myself (loudly) with the Nibelung’s Ring!

I had purchased the Dover written version of the four scores from SheetMusicPlus.com (about \$135) and already had the old Solti set (originally London label) that I bought at a bargain for \$50 (usually the cheapest used copy nowadays is about \$100). My intention was to hear influences on various film composers, especially Herrmann of course. Naturally Wagner directly or indirectly influenced more composers than you can shake a stick with (including Debussy) but I wanted to hear if any of the music reminds me of Herrmann’s music (and Korngold, Steiner, etc).

Now: Let’s start with Das Rheingold. Indeed the very first movement and 1st Scene reminds me of music that James Horner composed for the discovery of the glaive scene in the cave in KRULL (end of Reel 3M1 starting in Bar 83). It’s not a direct lift but more a stylistic affinity or even homage perhaps. As for Herrmann here, I recognized the contrary motion fast 16th note figures (2 per bar in 6/8 time on both composers’ scores) that Herrmann used in the Prelude of ENDLESS NIGHT. This is more clearly heard at the end of this opening sequence of Wagner (just before the singing commences). Go to page 15 of the Dover score, and 4:00 thru 4:12 of the Solti performance CD1, track #1.

I heard a fragment of Herrmann on page 61 (Solti cd 1, track # 5 at 3:37) with the ominous low register clarinets and bass clarinet playing slowly, when Wellgunde's sings "Ring, der maass-lose Machtihmverlieh."

Next is page 99 of the Dover score in the new section of fortissimo music (cd 1, start track # 9). This reminds me strongly of the rhythmic music Herrmann composed for the Alfred Hitchcock Hour in "The Life & Works of Juan Diaz" and that rather habanera repeat statement. After this short sequence Fasolt sings "Sanft schloss Schlafdein Aug." Page 107 (cd 1, track # 7 at 6:41) reminds me of Herrmann somewhat when Faf. Sings "siech undbleich doch sinkt ihre Blu-the." This is heard again on pages 146-147, cd 2, start of track # 4 thru 1:06, especially when at the :43 point Loge. Sings "Des Gar-tens Pflegerin ist nun ver..."

On page 180 (cd 2, start track # 8) just before Mime. Sings "Nehmteuch in Acht..." Here you find that oft-used, familiar rhythmic pattern Herrmann used in many of his score (for example, "The Nets" cue of JASON). This is important because Wagner bases his Valkyries music on this delayed triplet figure from Die Walkure (page 413 start, cd 3 track # 6 Solti).

Another Herrmann I picked up was page 216 of Das Rheingold in C time, CD 2, track # 13 starting at 3:17 just before the Vierte Scene (track #14) when Loge. Sings "Da, Vetter, sitze du fest!" Another I found later but I misplaced the location at this moment.

Now to Gotterdammerung: One of the most striking similarities (to me at least) was the dramatic octave descent of forte notes that reminds me of the end of the primal and intense Prelude to Herrmann's ON DANGEROUS GROUND. You hear this several times in Wagner's work but most prominently in CD 3, track # 7 at the 3:08 point (page 356 Dover score) when Siegfried sings "scho-ren. Noth-ung, das wer..." Sorry. That music is there, but the most dramatic example is on page 565 in CD 4, track # 13 at the 4:36 point in 4/4 time when Brunnh. Sings "trog—kei-ner wie Er!" It reminds me of that raw power evident in Herrmann's score. I wonder if Herrmann subconsciously picked up that Wagner music and used it in his creative re-working? You also hear it CD 2, track # 9 from 7:24 thru 7:30 (page 241 Dover) when "Siegfried zieht sein Schwet" and several seconds before he sings "Nun. Nothung, zeu-ge..." etc. Page 335 (CD 3, track # 5 at 4:10) shows a nice repeat rhythmic pattern (when "Wasist? And then "Jetztmerket klug" is sung) that I could see Herrmann using (but I guess never did!).

Page 23 (CD 1, track # 3 at 5:15 when Norn. Sings "Schwinget, Schwestern, das Seil!") reminds me of Herrmann with the woodwinds' half notes. Page 73 (CD 1, track # 7 at 1:43) in ¾ time reminds me of Herrmann too. "Rasch." Tempo-marking, fortissimo level. The muted horns playing on page 158 (CD 2, track # 4 at 3:38) with the kettledrums trill remind me of Herrmann. Similarly end of page 161 and into 162 (CD 2, track # 4 from 6:38 thru 7:24). Here the woodwinds play the pattern. A little bit of Steiner is reminded on page 215 (CD 2, # 7 at 5:46) when Brunnh. Sings

“Blitz und Ge-wolk.” Here the violins play low register fluid 16th note figures, something Max probably used in various “watery” scenes (perhaps KING KONG). Minor note. Also a bit of a Steiner effect in CD 4, track # 13 start when Brunnh. Eventually sings “Star-ke Scheite” etc.

That whole *Dritter Aufzug*” music (start page 420, CD 3 tracks # 13, 14, 15) reminds me a LOT of Debussy. A good representation is track # 15 at the 2:12 point when Flossh. Sings “Frau-en du sein!” and then Siegfried sings “Verzehrt’ich an euch mein...” I think this general section is the most Debussyian-like music in the RING. Incidentally, in *Gotterdammerung*, CD 1, track # 7 starting at the 1:43 point, I forgot to mention that the music here really reminds me of the first official (non-singing) cue from *Joy In The Morning*, “The Hallway.” I mean it’s really close!

Now to Siegfried (perhaps my favorite corner of the Ring saga). Of course it is perhaps the scariest of the corners because of the many uses of the Dragon “monster” music! I don’t find it particularly influencing Herrmann’s oeuvre but Wagner would’ve been a natural in Hollywood in the Golden Age with this kind of scary music! I hear a fair amount of Herrmann in Siegfried (nothing really obvious) but more influences on Korngold, and some on Steiner. A Herrmann reminder (for me) is page 73 of the Dover score, CD 1, track # 11 starting at 9:08 when the Wanderer sings “der Rie sen Ge-zucht...” etc. Especially from 9:19 on until the change of section (“Massig.”). This brass section is particularly effective (and rather “Herrmannesque”). The stopped horns was a familiar effect that Herrmann used—and so did Wagner frequently (also the muted horns). On page 132 (CD 2, track # 4 at 3:26 when Mime sings “das she’ichnundeut-lich voraus...” is an example. But the next page (133) is also Herrmannesque (CD 2, # 4 from 4:02 thru 4:35) when Mime sings “Rangersich mud’ mit dem Wurn...” Tuba and Pos action! The “Etwas belebend” tempo section on page 168 in 12/8 time (CD 2, # 6 at 3:52) reminds me slightly of Herrmann with the clarinets and bass clarinet playing repeat figures.

Page 61 (CD 3, track # 8 at 7:28) just after when Siegfried sings Schmeck’dumein Schwert, ck’liger Schwat-zer!” Reminds me a bit of *On Dangerous Ground* perhaps. A little later on page 268 (CD 3, track # 9 at 3:08 when Siegfried finishes singing on “erschla-gen!” and then resumes ‘n “Freund-liches Vog-lein...” Nice Herrmannesque string action I think. Another one is page 296, CD 3, start of track # 12, “Bedeutend langsamer” tempo marking when eventually Erda. Sings “Stark ruft das Lied.” Slow woodwinds choir to strings changeover.

I heard Korngold especially on page 142, CD 2, start track # 5, “Schwer und kraftig” tempo in 4/4 time when Siegfried sings “Allem!...Hohoo! Hoho! Ho hei!” Reminds me of the *Prince & the Pauper* music within the “Tom” cue in the first reel when his father warns Tom not to see that priest again. Also page 176 (CD 2, track # 8). Also page 193 (CD 2, track # 11 at the :57 point) when the Wanderer sings “Was andersist...” Page 277 also reminds me of Korngold, around the 7:32 point of track # 9 CD 3 (just before the *Dritter Aufzug* section, Track # 10). Also page 331, CD 4, track # 3 at 3:18 when Sigfried sings “Stemm’st du dort langer...” Also page 124 (CD 2, start track # 4 before Mime sings “Nthung! N0-thing!”

A little Tchaikovsky touch on page 375 (Schnell tempo) in 4/4 time with the flutes, CD 3, track # 9 at the 7:11 point starting.

I hear a little Tiomkin in some spots. For example, page 121 in the middle, CD 2, track # 3 at the 2:11 point when Mime sings "Der Wand'rer wusst' es gut..."

A nice Max Steiner reminded is page 221 (CD 3, end of track # 2 at the 5:25 point when Siegfried ends singing "lie-ber-Ge-sell?" Here you find the solo clarinet playing a lovely ascending passage and the strings supporting the harmony. Very nice! Something reminding me of A Summer Place or something. Page 321 (CD 4, track # 1 at 4:05) reminds me of a Steiner war score with the solo brass patterns. The Wanderer sings "Dort she'ich Sieg-fried nah'n." Pages 362-3 remind me of Max a bit (3 minute mark of track # 5 in CD 4). Page 414 also (# 11, CD 4 at the 2:30 point, "Woge das Wasser du auf..."

Of course the scary dragon music is heard in a lot of places. You first find it in this particular score on page 9 of the Dover score, CD 1, track # 2 at the 1:23 point, just before Mime sings "Faf-ner, der wil-de Wurn." You hear it on page 69 (CD 1, track # 11 at the 5:52 point Solti conducting after the Wanderer sings ..."Fafner den Hort." There's a short one at the 1:45 point of track # 9 CD 2. A nice extended version (page 221) is track # 3 CD 3 at 1:49 thru 2:19. This is just before Siegfried sings "Ha ha! Da Hat te mein.." Then at the 4:19 point with the howls! Pages 224-225.

There's not much I took note of in Die Walkure. I did note that John Williams Princess Leia theme seems to be reflected in solo clarinet heard (page 597), CD 4, track #1 starting at the 7:20 point. The violins are playing shimmering low 16th note repeat figures. Immediately after this is the Dritte Scene" (track # 2).
Time for lunch!

Now from July on Herrmann Influences:

I already have the Apollo ballet (strings only work) on the Philips label (438 350-2) two-cd set. If you want to hear a rather Herrmannesque track there, go to Apollo (Apollon Musagete) to track # 18, the "Pas d'action." It opens Herrmannesque (so to speak) especially in the very beginning but acceptably thru 1:19. It opens rather like something Herrmann did for an Alfred Hitchcock Hour episode (I forgot the title of the episode I am thinking of). Then it ends very Herrmannesque starting at the 4:50 point, once again like an AHH episode or some dramatic VIRGINIAN episode.

So I can see that Herrmann was influenced by Stravinsky to some extent. Another example: the third movement of Stravinsky's "Suite No. 2 for Small Orchestra." You can hear an excellent performance by the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra on the Deutsche Grammophon" label (289 453 458-2). The cd is called "Shadow Dances: Stravinsky Miniatures." Excellent performances. Anyway, track # 8 of that Suite # 2 sure reminds me a lot of the style of Herrmann's CITIZEN KANE, one of those lively romps. I mean, it sounds a lot like the style of "Kane's New Office" (track # 12 of the McNeely cd

rendition). In the Stravinsky track, especially go to :26 to :30. In that cd, track # 19, the third movement of Stravinsky's "Three Pieces for String Quartet" (1914) has a rather Herrmannesque sensibility, not unlike something Herrmann would write for PSYCHO.

Herrmann conducted Liszt as well. I do not know if he did Liszt's very beautiful "Les Preludes" (or Symphonic Poem # 3 that fans of Herrmann's exuberant music should listen to!) but there are parts of it that remind me of Herrmann. After the first big showpiece section ("Andante maestoso") comes the quiet "L'istesso tempo" section (starting Bar 47). This reminds me (especially at about the 3:57 location of the Rozsa conducting on the Seraphim label) of Herrmann's Beneath the 12 Mile Reef musical devices or allusions (perhaps particularly mid-way of "The Marker" cue). No direct quoting of course but a similar stylization. Liszt has the CB and bassoon play a deep response figure that reminds me of Herrmann. The violins play accompanying six-note 16th figures.

I think my favorite section of Les Preludes is the "Allegretto pastorale" (starting 10:55 of the Rozsa version, track # 1 of the "Liszt" cd). Some of this reminds me at times of Herrmann's playful music, but also even Moross (The Big Country) starting at 11:34, and others. Of course if you like Wagner, you'll love Liszt here!

I need to buy a heck of a lot of classical cds to find more similarities and influences. I need to check out Bax, more Elgar, and others. I think Herrmann pretty much was eclectic and borrowed stylizations or devices that suited him. He might like something from the old Late Romantic school of composers like Tchaikovsky and adapt something. For example, segments of the Big T's (Tchaikovsky, not Tiomkin!) "Manfred Symphony" sound quite Herrmannesque. Herrmann may like portions of what Rachmaninoff did (such as "Isle of the Dead") and use that (as in Citizen Kane). Bill Rosar was the first one to point that out to me long ago. You might find a fragment of Debussy here and there used as a motif in a Herrmann score. You will find some of Wagner (as in Vertigo), some of Stravinsky, and so forth. Herrmann very much admired Charles Ives and championed his works, but I really hear only just a little of Ives' style in Herrmann's works here and there. Ives tended to go far left field for his time, but Herrmann used some of his devices (like bitonality) in stead (such as the Twilight Zone theme, etc). The closest I found so far (but I need to get many more cds) of Ives sounding something like Herrmann would be sections of the second movement ("Adagio molto sostenuto") of Ives' Symphony # 1. But you can forget about Symphony # 4!

Some clues may be what he conducted for CBS in the Thirties & Forties. I'll try to check out more of the obscure composers and/or works. Herrmann conducted Berg's Wozzeck <opera> Op.7 (1917-22) but that was composed when Berg was still an Expressionist and before he became a serialist. You won't find Herrmann doing serial (strict chromaticism) music--although he experimented with atonality (free chromaticism) in his Early Works (reflected back very briefly in PSYCHO). Herrmann was overall a tonalist--though a very chromatic (not necessarily diatonic) one. He was also overall homophonic in texture ("melody" or lyric line accompanied by chords), not polyphonic usually (many-voiced contrapuntal style). He loved his ostinatos, his tritones, and his "cell" approach overall, as well as being fundamentally thirds-related in his harmony (infrequently quartal harmony-

-but observable in North By Northwest). So he pretty much was a composer who "stayed the course" (unlike Stravinsky).

.....

I mentioned at the end of the reply how I finally received a piano-conductor version (three staves) of Debussy's Arabesque # 2 arranged by H. Mouton. I wanted to compare it to the "hit" I felt I heard in Herrmann's "Victory" cue (Reel 10/pt 1A) from The Kentuckian.

In comparison, while they sound the same as a musical structure, they are notated quite differently, and the notes used are overall different. Bar 5 (:07 cd) of Arabesque # 2 corresponds to Bar 1 of "Victory" (repeated next bar). Herrmann tempo-marks it as Vivo, while Debussy marks Allegretto scherzando. Both are in C or 4/4 time. The key signature in Debussy's piece is G major (one sharp or F#). Herrmann's piece has no special key—just the C maj/A min (no sharps, no flats). The top staff of Debussy's piece is the "melody" line in question that is the "hit" I hear in Herrmann's piece. We find the "3" triplet 16ths Line 2 E-F#-E down to Line 1 B 8th figure followed by the next figure of D-E-D triplet 16ths down to G 8th to B-C-B triplet 16ths down to D 8th figure to A-B-A triplet 16ths down to E 8th. This is repeated in Bar 6. The interval for the first figure of B up to E is a P4 interval; then P5 for G up to D; M6 for D up to B; and then P4 of E up to A. In the second and third staves, strings are pizzicato on the G/B/D (G major) notes in various registers on the first beat, and then A/C/E/G (A min 7th) for the 4th figure. Completely traditional tonalplay here. In fact, Debussy starts the piece in Bar 1 on the D Dom 7th (D/F#/A/C) tonality.

Now: Herrmann's "Victory" cue may seem to sound the same but it is notated differently. The piccolo and flute play that "melody" line as G# 8th note trill down to E 8th (non-trill) up to F# 8thnote trill down to C# 8th up to E 8th note trill down to B (followed by a quarter rest). But the oboes/clarinets/celeste/harp/pizzicato violins play the phrase in non-trill fashion and finish it on C# down to A 8ths. Repeat this bar in Bar 2. The interval pattern is M3 (E up to G#) to P4 (C#-F#) to P4 (B-E) to M3 (A-C#). The only shared notes and interval for both pieces are B to E (perfect 4th interval).

Given the very fast tempo-marking of Herrmann's cue (Vivo) essentially we hear the basic triplet effect (that Debussy actually notated). To my mind, I feel Debussy notated it more correctly or truer to the way it sounds. If, as an example, Herrmann slowed it down about 20 years later, then maybe you would hear several more notes in each trill. But in the original 1955 version, it is fast and in essence you really just hear three notes for each trill (just as Debussy would notate it). The implied chord for the Victory cue in Bar 1 is E maj (E/G#/B) and then the A maj (A/C#/E) for the 4th figure, or perhaps A maj/9th (A/C#/E/B). He used different combined paints in this corresponding musical picture, but overall it looks (sounds) the same as a musical thought form or structure.

What may sound the same is not necessarily what looks the same on paper. This occurred in Herrmann's self-borrowings as well, in some occasions. "The Island" cue from Mysterious Island looks different from its borrowed version in a Crime Classics episode

about the knights of the round table—but it sounds exactly the same. The same applies here in the comparison of the Debussy piece and the Herrmann cue from *The Kentuckian*. It is possible that subconsciously Herrmann borrowed Debussy's second Arabesque motif and reworked it consciously as he saw fit—especially in terms of the chord profile and of course the look of the notes (but with the same musical effect as heard by the audience).

Now: I just recently watched again my dvd of Tchaikovsky's *Pique Dame* (The Queen of Spades). If you go to Act 2, Scene 4 (Chapter 19 on the dvd released by Philips of the Kirov performance) you will hear a nice Herrmannesque opening. Low strings play an incessant fast ostinato pattern while other strings play pizzicato notes. Violins play the "melody" line that can easily be adapted to Herrmannesque effect. This section of the opera is definitely the moodiest or atmospheric set of the whole piece. Rather spooky in fact!

Now: On a completely different note, earlier today (my day off) I listened to Debussy's *PELLEAS ET MELISANDE* and also read it since I finally received the full score from SheetMusicPlus.com. I purchased the Herbert von Karajan release of the opera released by EMI Classics. I highly recommend it. While Debussy's fluid style is not Herrmann's sturdier style of composing for an opera (Herrmann's *WUTHERING HEIGHTS*), nevertheless I have found several examples of orchestral effects and phrases that can be termed rather "Herrmannesque." Of the three cds, cd 2 has the best examples. Track # 1 for CD 2 especially starting at the :31 point evokes Herrmann somewhat with the ostinato harp figures and the drone harmonics violas and celli. Then the 2:40 point for two bars in 6/4 time. Except Herrmann would've repeated it more! Skipping some other minor examples, we come to track # 5 starting at the :47 point. Here Debussy utilizes a timbre effect that Herrmann was especially fond of: playing the same musical idea with changing instruments, and also a rather pyramid (layering) effect. . First he has the oboes playing grace notes to F#/Line 2 C whole notes tied to half notes next bar. Then, after a half rest, the english horn plays with the clarinets grace notes to half notes tied to whole notes next bar. In that next bar the bassoons then play grace notes to whole notes. Ala Herrmann, he repeats these bars in the next two bars. The start of track #6 is rather Herrmannesque to some extent with the ascending pizzicato VC/CB and then the harp taking over the ascent (violas are bowed trem).

Track #10 at the 2:38 point starts a nice four-note motif that is repeated with changing instrumentation. Again it reminds me of Herrmann.

In CD 1, track # 4 is very interesting with the nice "3" triplet figures repeating. At the 1:20 point for four bars, you have the suspenseful effect of the descending bowed trem phrase of the violins while the timp is rolled on D whole notes. Rather Herrmannesque. Track # 9 opening reminds me slightly of FAH 45. The Lento passage starting at :45 in track # 18 reminds me a bit of Herrmann, and then the descending bowed trem effects at 1:41. In track # 10 of CD 3 starting at 1:14, it reminds me of something that Herrmann could've composed for *MARNIE* perhaps. End track # 17 has a nice ending starting at 5:10, but especially starting at the 5:10 point to 5:36, it reminds me of Herrmann. Soft legato descending 8th note figures of the harp, bowed trem violins I, etc.

Once again, the similarities are not very many but I think Herrmann appreciated Debussy's work and overall economy. Debussy was not a constant tutti type! Herrmann was bolder and more direct than Debussy in most cases, but I like P. et M. and I'm glad I bought the cds and the written music. Personally I prefer ballets over opera. You can hear the music fully and directly, and watch some pretty nice dancing! That's why I really enjoy Tchaikovsky's ballets, especially NUTCRACKER. I prefer the Big T. over the demure Debussy, but variety is the spice of life! I prefer Herrmann's WUTHERING HEIGHTS over Debussy's P et M but the latter is excellent. Of course, while it is a ballet and not an opera, I much prefer T's NUTCRACKER over Herrmann's opera!

By the way, I also received in the mail Debussy's 2nd Arabesque. Remember how I found a "hit" in the music and Herrmann's "Victory" cue in THE KENTUCKIAN. If anyone is interested, I'll make some comments on the comparisons of the written music. For now, however, it's time for bed!

By the way, if anyone has the Disney animated SLEEPING BEAUTY dvd, go to Chapter 24 starting at the 251 point thru :08 of Chapter 25 (when the evil queen descends down to the gloomy cell where the prince is a prisoner). This is Tchaikovsky's music, but I cannot place it in the original Sleeping Beauty score. It's highly Herrmannesque!

New material: Now, I finished re-listening to Herrmann's Wuthering Heights opera (432 written pages!), and I can safely say that I do not hear any (or very, very little) Debussyian type music here as given in Pelleas et Melisande! While above I noted musical effects that can easily be related in a Herrmannesque fashion, there are no "hits" per se (as in the Arabesque motif). As stated before, I see more hits with Stravinsky before he went serial on us! I think Herrmann had more of that raw, primal energy Stravinsky demonstrated, whereas Debussy largely went on another musical trip. While his music at times in Pelleas is quite passionate, overall he tended to be a bit "softer" in his approach, perhaps. He didn't want to sound too much like Wagner! Probably Herrmann had more in common with Wagner in terms of dramatic style than Debussy allowed himself to express (although I understand Debussy was initially very influenced by Wagner—like many composers were!). Similarly, in terms of film music, Herrmann may end up being almost as influential as Wagner was in terms of being a highly influential figure in the style of many composers. Already this includes Elmer Bernstein (to some degree); Fred Steiner (to a greater degree); Goldsmith (to a striking degree in some scores); Garriguenc; Elfman of course; and so forth.

Korngold was of course influenced by Wagner. I'm now listening to Siegfried, the classic Sir Georg Solti conducting of the Vienna Phil (I have the old London version cd set of the four operas). In cd # 2, go to track # 5 ("Hoho!HoHo! Hahei!"), page 94 of the Libretto format score. Korngold pretty much used this rhythmic motif in one of his film scores. At first I assumed it was Robin Hood but now I think it's in *Prince & the Pauper*. I'll try to find the exact cue when I get time.

Completed Monday, December 10, 2007 at 10:41 pm; slightly added 12/16/07

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